



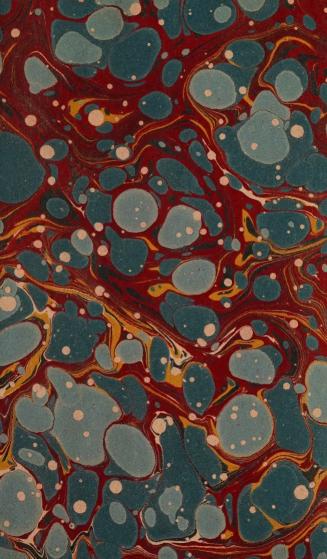
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# COMPITUM;

OR,

THE MEETING OF THE WAYS

AT THE

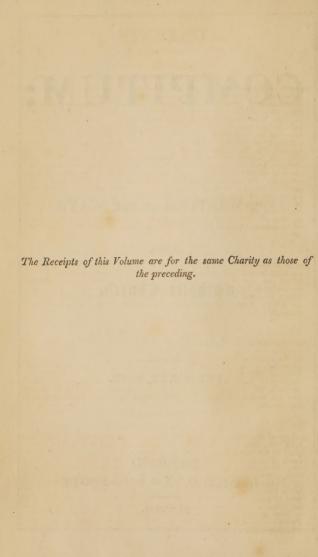
Catholic Church.

Kenelm Henry Digby

THE SIXTH BOOK.

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#### ERRATA.

Page 13, line 34, for Love read Love's ,, 16, line 38, for Fullo read Fulco

## Compitum.

BOOK VI.



THE ROAD OF WISDOM.

E are arrived at the last region of this forest, and at the crossing of other roads, answering to those which bear a heavenly name,

"A silvis silvas, et ab arvis arva ego cerno;"

but, though we had promise of a happy change on quitting the last road, the impressions caused by such tracts as we have been lately traversing do not yield all at once on leaving them. There we passed through

caused by such tracts as we have been lately traversing do not yield all at once on leaving them. There we passed through scenes of ruin, that might recall the lines of the old poet, who views them as symbolical:—

"Beeches and broad oaks
Were blowen to the ground,
Turned upward their roots,
In tokening of dread."

It is with the moral as with the forest journey that represents it. There are pauses in life, and times of transition, when, without being directly influenced by any of the many forms of evil, there is an experience of distress, a consciousness of having caught infection from the air one breathed, occasioned by a general retrospect of them all. Human kindness, divine charity, wise moderation, all must have suffered from having been placed in hostility to others. We resemble at present travellers who have not yet recovered from the effects of visiting those cypress swamps in the states of Delaware and of Maryland, which are also called dismal swamps, and swamps of distress; where the cedar and the bald cypress cover vast marshes, in which only bears and serpents live. The description given by Marbois in his letter to Malesherbes might convey an idea of Vol. VI.

what we have seen and experienced upon the last roads. drifted sand, under which the winds had covered the pine forest, leaving visible only the dead and withered tops of each tree; the deep and hardly passable morass; the bears' walk; the snakes' grove and the stagnant pools, where toads and serpents bathe; the menacing retreat of these serpents, hissing as they retire; their sufferings in winter, when they take refuge in the hollow trees, in which they are sometimes sawed across; the charcoal heaps, and black stems of trees half consumed by fire which the lightning kindled; the spectacle of ruin there presented by prostrate cypress-trees, a hundred feet in length below their branches, and sixteen in circumference-trees which when once cut die for ever; the burning, in 1782, of four thousand acres of venerable cypress in less than twelve hours, when, if the wind had not changed, the narrator, Jones, who describes the same, would have perished with his family, the smoke being so thick that they could not see any thing three feet distant from them, and the only means to escape suffocation being to lie with their faces to the ground-though even then, with mouths closed, they inhaled ashes, which affected their tone of voice for a long time afterwards; the terrors of this conflagration, so apt an image of the moral and political calamities we witnessed: the flames rising to more than a hundred feet in height, lighting up the horizon to a distance of four hundred and twenty miles; their fearful roaring; the sound of the falling trees; the atmosphere sparkling with kindled charcoal, rising to a prodigious height, and carried to a distance of fourteen miles from the place of destruction; -all these scenes and incidents can recall the moral dangers and miseries from which we have but lately turned. But, in fine, we have turned from them, and we may now expect henceforth a different impression from our wanderings. "Sta in viis pluribus," says St. Jerome, " ut ad illam viam, quæ ad Patrem ducit, pervenias." This whole journey supposes compliance with the precept.

Among the descriptions that we meet with of forest wanderings, there is an account of a change of scenery on a memorable occasion, that might be taken to represent the transition of views which is prepared for us here. Vasca Nunez and his companions, travelling to discover the sea beyond the mountains, had to traverse a region in some respects resembling that which we have just left. They were obliged to climb rocky precipices, to struggle through close and tangled forests, and to cross deep and turbulent streams; suffering from hunger and the attacks of hostile tribes, furiously yelling as they assailed them with arrows. They had, in fine, to scale the bald summit of the mountain, from which the long-desired prospect burst upon their view. We are arrived at a point which may remind

us of that moment when the Pacific Ocean was beheld by these discoverers. We have been slowly traversing dark and dangerous ways, yielding to many the experimental foretaste of eternal things; ways tortuous and wild, precipitous and mournful, re-echoing with the cries of men bent on our destruction; a journey during which every one more or less suffers injury; and of which we may say, in the words of an old poet,—

"En la forest d'ennuyeuse Tristesse, Un jour m'avint qu'à par moy cheminoye."

And now, having arrived at the tracts corresponding with those ways which St. Bonaventure calls after the deiform operation of eternal things, it is as if a happier and more loving world were unfolded to us. We do not see the waters of the Pacific glittering in the morning sun, but we look down upon a beautiful and friendly region, in which we know are no implacable enemies, no savages, with airy monsters, whose shadowing wings do seem to cast a vail of death on all around, but only solemn avenues, through delightful groves, breathing peace and love, which, seen from a distance, may recall that prospect formed by the blue olive-trees of the academy, reaching to the mountains of Attica; memorable spot, which, making all due reserves in consequence of its Pagan origin, is still associated with names that, conventionally at least, represent the study and the dignity of wisdom. How venerable are these long living galleries of aged trees!

> "In such green palaces the first kings reign'd, Slept in their shade and angels entertain'd; With such old councillors they did advise, And, by frequenting sacred groves, grew wise."

Into a valley, then, in a remote depth of the forest, closed by darkly wooded steeps, where the oldest oaks and beeches form a profound retreat, which is often, as poets say, a consolation of sad thoughts, descending thus pensive and disquieted, we find a tract covered with mulberries, forming a shade appropriate to the title of the first of these peaceful roads on which we enter; since, if you will hear foresters, there are wise trees and foolish trees, to the former of which classes these belong: for as the mulberry-tree never puts forth its buds and leaves till all danger of inclement weather is passed away, as if resolved not to trust its blossoms to the churlish skies, it is therefore called the wise tree, being adopted by heralds as a hieroglyphic of wisdom, of which the property is, say they, to speak and do all things in season; which description is as old as Pliny's time, for he says, "Some trees bud late and flower quickly, as the mul-

berry-tree, which does not germinate till the cold is over, and therefore it is called the wisest of trees. But, when it begins, it bursts forth in such a universal germination, that in one night it

completes its beauty, blooming even with a sound \*."

Nor is it the mulberry alone here that corresponds with the direction of this road. These hawthorns, that cannot be allured by April warmth to blossom sooner than the time appointed for the swallow to arrive, when their sweet perfumes will be safe from storms, form for it a fitting company. Foresters remark, too, that these oaks are wiser than the lime-trees growing by their side; and that among the latter there is a great difference even between individual trees; for, in every grove of limes, some can be distinguished as endowed with more prudence than others. "I have several of these trees," says Varenne-Fenille, "amongst which I remarked two as being always very late in budding. At the end of April, in 1790, a frost came on. The leaves of the others turned brown, and their organization was so injured that none of the leaves, not even those that were not fully expanded till after the frost, attained to their usual size. Most of them fell at the end of May and June; and even the branches of the year were poor. The late limes, on the contrary, did not suffer." Theophrastus speaks of an oak in Sybaris, and of a plane in Cyprus, which used not to be in leaf till midsummer t. In copses, the young shoots wanting wisdom are destroyed in vast quantities every year by the frosts of spring; while the larch and the pine are never to be deceived by the uncertain season. Moreover, in these wise trees, the principal bud at the top, which produces the spire intended to prolong the stem, besides being covered like the other buds for a long time with a defensive armour, is the slowest of all to expand, being three weeks later than the others, as if all the tree's care were directed to preserve what is most precious. The poplar of Carolina, all through life, indicates its prudence in a way no less remarkable; for as its leaves present much surface, and its wood is tender and brittle, it would not be able to resist the force of the wind, if its leaves were not attached by a very long elastic stalk, flattened in a contrary sense to the surface of the leaves, by means of which artifice, resembling the process of feathering the oar, the leaf presents to the wind its edge and not its surface 1. Thus the forest has symbols appropriate to the road of wisdom.

Before we proceed upon this new way, some apology may at first be thought due to those whom the stranger is inviting to accompany him; for, if Cicero deemed it commendable in Panæ-

<sup>\*</sup> N. H. lib. xvi. 41. † Hist. Plantarum, lib. i.

<sup>#</sup> Varenne-Fenille, Mém. sur l'Admin. Forestière.

tius to have replied to a certain youth,—who asked, "an sapiens amaturus esset?"—in the humble words, "De sapiente videbimus; mihi et tibi qui adhuc à sapientia longe absumus non est committendum ut incidamus in rem commotam,"—well may so rude a wanderer feel conscious that every one would have a right to assail him with ridicule, if it could be imagined that he had taken this direction from choice, as supposing himself qualified to guide others; but the fact speaks for itself so plainly, that it can be hardly necessary to furnish any explanation. It is evident that the plan of this whole work obliged him to leave no part of the forest unexplored; and it will be found that in taking this turn, as also in pursuing the following roads, for which his feet are assuredly as little prepared, he desires only, like one of the common vulgar, to hear those speak who have the authority of wisdom to direct us all.

Although we have arrived at a safer region than that through which we lately passed, we must not suppose that all the dangers and deceptions of the forest are at an end. What dangers can there be, it will be asked, upon the road of wisdom? Poor soul! thou thinkest that all are wise who call themselves, or are

by some called so ;-

"But thou'rt deceived, the world hath a false light;
Fools think 'tis day, when wise men know 'tis night."

Besides that there is no road so even but it has some stumblingplaces or ruts in it, this new path itself soon branches off in different directions. "Two masters," says St. Bridget, "stood before a person who desired wisdom. One of them said to him, ' If you will follow my wisdom, it will lead you to a lofty mountain; but the way is hard and stony under your feet, difficult and precipitous in ascent. If you labour in that wisdom, you will have what is dark without, but bright within; and if you hold it firmly you will have what you wish, but as a circle it revolves round, and attracts you to itself more and more: quasi circulus circumvolvitur, et attrahit te sibi magis ac magis dulciter, ac dulcius, donec lætitia ab omni parte tempore suo perfundaris.' The other master said, 'If you will follow my wisdom, it will lead you into a flowery vale, abounding in fruits. The way is soft under your feet, and easy in descent. If you persist in that wisdom, you will have what is bright without, but when you hope to enjoy it you will find nothing.' The former," adds the Saint, "is the spiritual wisdom, to renounce self-will for the will of God. This leads to the happy life. The way is rocky and abrupt in ascending, for it is difficult not to love worldly honour more than Heaven\*. The latter signifies the

<sup>\*</sup> Revelat. S. Birgittæ, lib. ii. c. 22.

wisdom of the world, which is but straw; for there is no utility in it, no food for the soul; nothing but a name and vain labour; for when a man dies all this wisdom perishes, and those who

praise him see him no more \*."

Now the dangers of the road will become visible enough when we reflect that it is precisely to this latter wisdom that men of a certain kind turn when seeking to avoid the centre, and escape from the attraction of the Church; and that this spirit acts upon them like the enchantments of Maugis, in old chivalrous romance, causing some to turn incessantly round, like the sentinels on the walls of Montauban; and others to be surrounded with a dense fog and vapour, so as to be unable to see one another, each walking about, feeling for his enemy, and

only striking this terrible mist.

Theologians say that worldly wisdom has the faith of inordinate love which is not divine nor exceeding the capacity of the human understanding, being ultimately resolved into reason or human authority, which alone it values t, requiring men to understand, with all their senses, that whatever they have done, do, or shall do, according to such views, is highly reasonable, and exactly conformable to the kind of interests with which alone they are acquainted. This constitutes the wisdom taught by many who cherish a deadly hatred for the Catholic Church, who often may be found conspiring, and saying, Circumveniamus justum: who, to serve their interest, think all arts lawful, and who ascribe all success to genius, intrigue, and deception 1. Such is the description given by mystic writers of that philosophic reason which proceeds as if God had made no revelation to man; "which supposes that, being himself his reason and his law, man owes nothing in regard to either but to himself, that the reason of each man ought to march alone, recognizing no superior law, no authority, and that it is free to believe what it chooses, and to act according to what it believes." These men pretend to have no need of other wisdom but what the unassisted school of common nature and scientific study yield: they repeat the Siren's promise to impart knowledge, without which, say they, a return to one's country would be unsatisfactory. No one, they sing, ever passes by without first hearing us-

> "Post varias avido satiatus pectore musas Doctior ad patrias lapsus pervenerit oras."

So at the first steps along this road we become sensible of dangers meeting wanderers, deceiving and deceived, who seek

‡ Id. 10.

<sup>\*</sup> Id. lib. i. c. 33.

<sup>+</sup> Ægid. Gabrielus, Specimina Mor. Diabolic. p. ii. 6.

the shades where many think the light of Catholicity can never reach them.

"Quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna Est iter in sylvis."

The Marquis de Mirabeau said formerly, "We have no bouquet à Iris," or dissertation on mineral waters, in which the author does not contrive to insert his profession of faith," or, in other words, his opinion that the true moral centre is a place to be fled from, and that what is farthest from it enjoys the true light of minds. "O opinion," exclaims the old poet, "to a thousand mortals who are nothing, thou givest a brilliant appearance"—

\*Ω δόξα, δόξα, μυρίοισι δη βροτῶν οὐδὲν γεγῶσι βίοτον ὤγκωσας μέγαν \*.

Men of this wisdom fear the mountain of the church, where "the chase of error is too hot; they seek the dark, the bushy, the tangled forest; they would imbosk; they feel themselves struck in the transparent streams of Divine truth; they would plunge and tumble, and think to be hid in the foul weeds and muddy waters, where no plummet can reach the bottom." These are the sophists who find an image of their influence in the meteors of the forest, which,

"Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Mislead th' amazed night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far."

"Le Diable est philosophe," says an author of the thirteenth century. "He knows the state and manners of man, and his complexion, and to what vice he is most inclined by nature or by habit; and this is the side on which he assaults him †".

Subtle he needs must be who could seduce angels. The diabolic wisdom, under the title of philosophy, attracts thou-

sands on this way, who say, at every prohibition,-

"Why, then, was this forbid? Why, but to awe; Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant, His worshippers?"

Many are at length persuaded that Catholicism confines the understanding and enslaves the soul; "Catholic ignorance," as a recent writer observes, "being the preference of moral to physical truth; and Catholic slavery the tenet that man must suffer before he can enjoy, and that the cross is the measure of

<sup>\*</sup> Androm. 319. † Le Ménagier de Paris, D. i. a. 3.

the world." Never will it enter into the heads of these philosophers to combat separated religions that have sprung from revolt. "No infidel," says the Count de Maistre, "has ever thought of giving battle to the Oriental Church, and this has never done any thing to defend its own doctrines. But Protestantism, Socinianism, Rationalism, and Illuminism attack, all together, the central faith. The Catholic is the only religion which alarms other religions, and which is never perfectly tolerated. There are," he adds, "in this capital of St. Petersburg Armenian, Anglican, Lutheran, and Calvinistic preachers far more opposed than we are to the faith of the country, which never cares what they say. It is very different in regard to Catholics. They cannot utter a word, or take a step, which does not become the subject of examination, criticism, or precaution: for all false wisdom feels that it has no real enemy but truth." When it was a question of emancipating the Catholics, in England, the most renowned of the French sophists, who denies the existence of God, while explaining the mechanism of His works, said to an English Protestant Professor, who visited him in Paris, "You have them down at present: keep them down." Catholicity, they conclude, is fit only for the multitude; and so they invite all the initiated to enjoy their dear wit and gay rhetoric,

#### "That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence."

Catholicity, they say, has nothing to offer that can suit them; and, unfortunately, they may be believed; for, as St. Augustine says, "Cui amaro nil dulcescit, cui turbato nil quiescit, et cui vago nil consistit;" and yet these men will still pass with many for the true representatives of wisdom, the real and secure

guides to which public opinion should submit itself.

It is a melancholy thing to consider how many admirable arts are made use of to propagate wisdom of this sinister kind, scattering prejudice and ignorance, and with it jealousy and hatred. In this region of the forest there are seen "tenebrificous and dark stars," by whose influence night is brought on, and which do ray out darkness and obscurity upon the earth as the sun does light.—It would be difficult to magnify the danger of proceeding under the influence of several authors who are, it may be said, tenebrificous stars of the first magnitude. Thus, then, the road of wisdom, since some will force themselves into company which they have no right to join, has dangers and difficulties like every other track through the forest of life; and those who desire to lose themselves may pass along, following their favourite philosopher, without heeding the signals and avenues which direct and lead to truth.

"As the love of God," says St. Anthony of Padua, "is never without the light of knowledge—for it is a fire inflaming and illuminating—so the love of the world, which readily enters the sophist's school, is never without blindness; for it is a fire conformable to the infernal fire which burns without light in darkness; and, therefore, they who do not adhere to divine love cannot discern judgment, but judge only according to the face of sin which they assume, as is said in the Psalm, Facies peccatorum sumitis \*."

Wise men of the world, while insensible to the radical defect which pervades their own intelligence, may evince penetration in exposing the faults of others that are free from it, and may, with admirable clearness, develope many half, while combating whole truths. Cornelius Agrippa, himself among the vain, writes De vanitate, and discloses well the vanities of science. "Vani autem sunt omnes homines," concludes Molanus, "et vanè de vanitate scribunt in quibus non subest scientia Dei †."

—— "other light,
Though it be quick and sharp enough to blight
The Olympian eagle's vision, is dark,
Dark as the parentage of chaos."

To those without it should be addressed the words,-

" Desinite indoctum vanâ dulcedine vulgus Fallere ‡."

"The gift of understanding," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "makes the intelligence quick and penetrative. The gift of wisdom illuminates man as to spiritual and eternal things, as does the gift of science to visible things of nature, and the gift of counsel as to action and practice. But of what use is it to have a clear intelligence if you have a corrupt will? How many do we see who are ingenious and malicious, skilled and cunning and vicious, and whose genius only serves to iniquity §?" He concludes, therefore, that "faith is more useful to the world than knowledge ||. How many simple and illiterate seculars do we see," he asks, "practised only in breaking of bread, that is, in hospitality, who are fervent, devout, and enlightened; and how many learned theologians, on the contrary, worldly, tepid, frigid, and dark ¶!" The very Pagans recognized the difference, speaking of the man, "unschooled but wise, abnormis sapiens;" and remarking, that even young

<sup>\*</sup> Serm. Fer. iii. Hebd. iv. in Quad.

<sup>1</sup> Ov. Met. v.

I In Octav. Pasch. Serm.

<sup>†</sup> Lib. iv. 21.

<sup>§</sup> Dom. iv. post Pasch.

<sup>¶</sup> Fest. Res. Fer. ii.

men become worse, and contract folly by resorting to places reputed as the schools of wisdom, saying, "adolescentes in scholis stultissimos fieri."

That Catholicity should be foreign to men whose wisdom becomes foolishness even in the eyes of the world, which is its centre; that it should have no attractions for them, if by circumstances connected with it; and that it should be rejected by them with disdain, if they should only pass near it, coming from a distance, is a result for which every one who has any knowledge of the oracles of truth must be prepared. "There are two kinds of men," says the Père de Ligny, "with whom we find that our Saviour was never once agreed-those who criticize, and those who refuse with harshness; for nothing accords less with His benignity than the malignity of the former, and the hardness of the latter." But it is from the first epistle to the Corinthians that men can learn how to estimate the antagonism between the false wisdom, which has so many followers, and the philosophy of the Catholic Church. There they observe the Apostle of the nations declaring, that he preached not in "wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ should be made void:" there they are told, that the prophecies must be fulfilled which say, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; and the prudence of the prudent I will reject:" there they are referred to the historical fact, that "the world by wisdom knew not God:" there they are told to observe how, while "the Greeks seek after wisdom," the Apostle preaches the foolishness of the cross, which is "the wisdom of God, who is wiser than men:" there they are told to observe the facts around them, to observe in the primitive Church, "that not many wise according to the flesh are called:" that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise:" that unto Christians Christ Jesus "is made wisdom:" that the preachers of this religion came to the world, not in loftiness of wisdom, nor in the persuasive words of human wisdom: that their faith was not to "stand on the wisdom of men:" that they are to speak, not in the learned words of human wisdom: that, although they speak wisdom among the perfect, it is not "the wisdom of this world, neither of the princes of this world," that they speak; "but the wisdom of God in a mystery," a wisdom which is hidden, "which God ordained before the world:" there, in fine, they are taught that "if any one seem to be wise in this world, he should become a fool that he may be wise; for, that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, who will catch the wise in their own craftiness, and that God knows the thoughts of the wise to be but vain." Thus it appears that the book of Revelation agrees with the natural sentiment of every generous heart, which feels that there is a wisdom to be fled from, as from a thing as contrary as villainy itself to goodness and to truth; and accordingly, in point of fact, it is soon discovered that the odious wisdom which is alluded to in all these passages, that which, in woman's presence, as the poet says, shows like folly, and from which every noble mind turns instinctively with disgust, possesses a centrifugal force to keep men ever at a distance wandering through the regions where faith hath never shone. No man, by the guidance of this wisdom, has ever been conducted to the centre, as perhaps no man was ever reasoned out of his opposition to the Catholic Church, to which conversion is effected by every thing that is most opposed to such wisdom, frequently it being the result of a sudden illumination, as Bossuet observes. We have a crowd of examples of this kind, even as the Count de Maistre says, "from superior men, the most capable of reasoning. The last," he adds, "is that of Werner, who found himself seized with a stroke of Catholicism on seeing the blessed sacrament carried out of the Church of St. Stephen. Whether," he adds, "the happy change be effected thus suddenly, or by a gradual operation, it always commences by the heart, where syllogisms have nothing to do. Never a man was reasoned out of his opposition; and, until pride be completely dethroned, nothing is done \*." Following deceitful views of wisdom, we find the present road thronged with a multitude of grave and formal men, for whom there may be neither legible signals nor issues passable to the Catholic Church; but for men, in another sense wise, neither of these are wanting in abundance; and therefore the Apostle, as if recognizing the twofold multitude that pursues this road, expressly appeals to the Corinthians in the same epistle, in their capacity of philosophers, and uses these emphatic words, "I speak as to wise men; judge ye yourselves what I say."

As we proceed, the contrast between the true and the false wisdom will be observed clearly enough; but, as this is not the place for pointing out the distinctive features of each, let us advance, remarking the first issue to the centre from this road which may be traced to a recognition that it is the society formed by the Catholic religion above all others in the world, which justly appreciates, deeply esteems, and generously re-

wards, wisdom.

It is needless to review the history of the Church for proof of the constant transmission of the love of wisdom, which reigned within it through every age, from the beginning to the present day. The martyrs and confessors, the early fathers, the scholastics of the middle ages, the Catholic doctors who succeeded to them, and their innumerable disciples, who are still

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres, i. 80.

found in every class of society, can be confidently appealed to on this point, wherever there is an unprejudiced and attentive observation of facts. It will not be now upon this road, as in ancient times when men met only a few isolated individuals, Persian Magi (amongst whom, Cicero tells us, were always the kings of that nation\*), Chaldæan sages, Egyptian priests, Gallic or British Druids, Indian gymnosophists, Latin moralists, Greek philosophers; and many of these, perhaps, complaining that they were generally misunderstood, neglected, and despised by their contemporaries, as when Socrates used to say, alluding to Eschinus, "that the son of a pork-butcher was the only person who had any opinion of him;" we shall meet upon it a promiscuous multitude, composed of persons of all classes, of all ages and orders, who love and esteem, above all things, that true wisdom of which only a few imperfect broken rays were gathered from tradition, and transmitted by a small number of remarkable men of the ancient world; the philosophers being generally, perhaps, less acquainted with it than the very people whom they most despised. It is not lonely wanderers whom we shall overtake seeking Egypt, like Pythagoras, to examine the commentaries of the priests, and to learn the observations of innumerable ages; then travelling to Persia to be a disciple of the Magi; thence proceeding to Crete and Lacedæmon to study laws and manners. It will not be an isolated example like that of Democritus that will astonish us, showing one man unlike all others, for the reason that, when he might have been rich, his father being able to give a feast to the army of Xerxes, yet he renounced his patrimony to study wisdom with more facility; or like that of Carneades laboriosus et diuturnus sapientiæ miles, remarkable for ceasing to philosophize only with his life, of whom Valerius says, "Ergo animo tantummodo vita fruebatur, corpore vero quasi alieno et supervacuo circumdatus erat +." We shall find the whole way thronged by men who hold, and that too practically, with Plato, that truth is the chief of all good for ment, and who at the same time enjoy the supreme wisdom without having to search for it, who love and possess it for others as well as for themselves, and who are ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of living and dying in conformity with its lessons.

Cæsar speaks of the barbarians taking refuge in the forests of Gaul and Germany, and says, "Sese in solitudinem ac silvas abdiderant." During the middle ages, when Catholicism had influence, it was wise and learned men that, in prodigious numbers the forests received, as yielding an asylum from the violence of the few under the standard of the Prince of the world. Ever

<sup>\*</sup> De Divinat. i. 41.

where this violence was restrained, multitudes thus hid themselves, thinking, as Tacitus says of poets, "that, if they were to excel, it was necessary for them to leave the conversation of the crowd, and the pleasures of the city, and to retire, as the poets themselves say, in nemora et lucos, id est, in solitudinem \*." For Catholicity, it must be remarked, attracts wise men, by proposing, to such as feel themselves qualified for it, that sweet and wise retreat which Plato deemed to be so eminently the choice of him who is undeceived as to human happiness. In that magnificent vision of the future state which Socrates describes at the end of the Republic, he says, "The soul of Ajax came, and, remembering the affront he had received concerning the armour of Achilles, refused to resume a human body. After that came the soul of Agamemnon, who, having in aversion the human race on account of his past misfortunes, chose the condition of an eagle. The soul of Epeus, who made the wooden horse, preferred the condition of a woman skilled in working at her The soul of Ulysses came also to choose its lot, but remembering his past calamities, and thenceforth exempt from ambition, it sought for a retreat and the peaceful condition of a private person, which others had left, and said that such would be its choice if it had been the first †."

It is Catholicity which invites and attracts men to the secret paths of study, led by the love of moral truth and sacred wisdom. Has the Church any influence in this locality, then

here you are sure to find cells, and books, and all

"Those instruments with which high spirits call The future from its cradle, and the past Out of its grave,"

Her voice prompts all those words that poets utter when they say,—

"Bid them love each other and be blest,
And leave the troop which errs, and which reproves,
And come and be my guest—for I am Love."

Far from her the desire of producing or perpetuating a stationary period in regard to wisdom. She wishes that each man and each nation should ever advance towards its fountain. "Adhuc enim," she says with St. Augustin, "modicum lumen est in hominibus; ambulent, ambulent ne eos tenebræ comprehendant ‡." A change comes o'er the spirit of our wanderer—tacita studiorum occultus in umbra. He reads old books, and seeks to learn from them the magic of their mysteries. He

finds himself drawn on to love that Church which exalts the dignity, purifies the intention, enlarges the sphere, and rewards with richest recompense the wisdom of the studious. There no one, unless through his own grievous fault, has occasion to complain that he had unnumbered obstacles to turn his steps aside from this delightful road; that, if he should at last have conquered them, it has been by purchase, and for a dear price, having grown old in the solitary, unaided struggle. For the invitation of Catholicity to man from his youth might be expressed in the beautiful language of just reason, as represented by the poet, saying, "You will shine in the schools: you will not pass your time talking idly in the public places; you will have no law-suits for frivolous subjects; you will proceed to the academy, to walk beneath the shade of sacred olives with a wise young man of your own age. In happy leisure you will enjoy the sweet odours exhaled from the yew, and the foliage of the white poplar in the beautiful days of spring, when the plane and the young elm blend their murmuring sound \*." In such proposals there is an attraction which many minds will feel. For men, in regard to the retreat required for study, resemble the holly, which desires the shade in its youth, and which is therefore met with so commonly in the woods, growing under the loftiest trees, as if delighting in the shelter †. Men, after all, would not wish to be young pines, of which foresters say that, when once planted, instead of being attended to like other trees, they ought to be abandoned to themselves and forgotten during many years ‡. A system which leaves them thus to themselves in youth can never be recognized as emanating from a mother; but Catholicism attracts to itself those who would nourish a love for something higher than the passing interests of each day: within the Church such men are found, while, as the poet says of others,

"Thro' briars and brambles, in the world we stray, Stiff opposition, and perplex'd debate, And thorny care, and rank and stinging hate, Which choke our passage, our career control, And wound the firmest temper of the soul.

O sacred solitude! divine retreat!
Choice of the prudent, envy of the great!
By thy pure stream, or in thy waving shade,
We court fair wisdom, that celestial maid:
There, blest with health, with bus'ness unperplex'd,
This life we relish, and ensure the next."

<sup>&</sup>quot;I will continue to study and to write," says Rupertus to

<sup>\*</sup> Nubes, 1005.

<sup>+</sup> Varenne-Fenille, Mém sur l'Admin. Forestière, ii.

Cuno, bishop of Ratisbon, in the epistle prefixed to his work de Divinis Officiis. "I will feast in these writings, as the holy law prescribes: et adorato Domino Deo tuo epulaberis in

omnibus bonis, quæ Dominus Deus tuus dederit tibi."

Cardan, in his old age, was so contented with his state, that he declared he would not change it to become young again if he were to give up wisdom in the exchange. "It appears," says Leibnitz, relating his words, "that such men have pleasures which cannot be conceived by those who have not tasted them." "It is not a little thing," he adds, "to be content with God, and with the universe, and to possess those true principles which give such an advantage over all that the ancients derived

from their philosophy."

Who, then, that really seeks wisdom, can turn from the centre in Catholicity, where it is so prized? "Abundantia hominis sapientia ejus est," says S. Pachomius\*. Whither, but to the Catholic Church will you prudently proceed to find such abundance? "Sapientia apud sanctos est," says the same voice; "et in illis Dei voluntas reperitur;" all studies else are but as circular lines, and death the centre where they must all meet ‡. The old French, alluding to what we have just seen, used to speak of a Lenten saint, un saint de Carême, meaning one of those men that hide themselves for the study of wisdom, saying with the poet, we will feasting philosophize,

" \_\_\_\_\_ neque enim, cum lectulus aut me Porticus excepit, desum mihi §."

How loved, how honoured are such characters where the Catholic religion reigns! Catholicity accepts even the term philosopher. St. Odilo, in his life of St. Maiolus, calls Lyons Philosophiæ nutricem et matrem; the old historian of Muri, which the unjust pretenders to wisdom have so recently plundered and suppressed, says that "study is indispensable for religious men.-Libros autem oportet semper describere et augere et meliorare, ornare, et annotare, quia vita omnium spiritualium hominum sine literis nihil est | ." Men in the world are not left ignorant by Catholic voices that wisdom is better for them than all treasures. "They tell me, seigneur uncle," writes Antonio de Guevara to Don Diego de Guevara, "that you are very sad and out of humour in consequence of the weather having injured your crops, and that you are not contented, as is usual with old men but not with such as are prudent like you. Your vines are frozen, but it would be a far greater misfortune to have your

<sup>\*</sup> Epist, iii. ap. Luc. Holst, Cod. Reg. † Massenger,

<sup>†</sup> Id. § Hor. Sat. i. 4.

<sup>||</sup> Acta Fundat. Murens. Monast.

wisdom frozen than your fruits; that would be a greater loss than if all your domains and lordships were ravaged by tempests: for, my lord uncle, you know well that in the markets of Villada and Palentia there is plenty of corn to sell, but at no

fair of Medina can you purchase wisdom."

But would you behold proof how, in the Catholic civilization, moral wisdom was honoured, and how it ever proved a road of advancement to the highest station? You have only to refer to the history of the Holy See, which displays so many men of the lowest birth exalted to that highest of all dignities, and solely in consideration of their assiduity in cultivating it. Pope St. Dionysius was of such obscure birth, that his origin cannot be traced; John XVIII. was of the lowest race; Damasus II. was son of a Bavarian peasant; Adrian IV. had so poor a mother, that she depended for subsistence on the alms of her parish; Urban IV. was the son of a cobbler: Nicholas IV. was the child of an indigent family; Celestin V. was the eleventh son of poor parents; Benedict XI. was son of a washerwoman; John XXII. was son of a collector of old rags; Benedict XII. was a miller's son; Boniface IX. was son of a poor family fallen from a noble station; Alexander V. did not know who were his parents,—all he knew was, that when a boy he lived by begging his bread; Nicholas V. had a mother who lived by rearing poultry; Xystus IV. was son of a fisherman, with whom he exercised the same calling; Adrian VI. was son of a shipwright; Pius V. was son of a shepherd; Xystus V. was son of a herdsman. Thus was realized the symbolism of the triple crown, which, as an eloquent writer observes, "is the crown of the superiority of merit over birth, of the intelligence over the flesh, and of charity which unites, over even justice, which contends \*."

But, without turning to the society professedly Spiritual and intellectual, refer to what took place in temporal States during the most distracted periods of Christian history, and you will find the esteem of wisdom distinguishing all men Catholically influenced. Alfred, desiring to obtain Grimbald from France to add to the number of wise instructors for his people, sent an embassy of bishops, presbyters, deacons, and religious laymen, bearing valuable presents to his ecclesiastical superior Fullo, archbishop of Rheims, to ask permission for him to come to reside in England. Wisdom was held in such high honour, that the imperial palace of Charlemagne had for courtiers men whose only ambition was to cultivate it. Then was there the school of the palace, to which true philosophers from all countries resorted. Innumerable instances of this profound and practical respect for wise men may be adduced from

<sup>\*</sup> Gerbet, Esquisse de Rom. Chrét. ii. c. 7.

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the history of Christendom down to the latest times. But if you turn from the centre, where will you find wisdom, in the ancient sense of the word, thus prized, thus loved, and honoured? Where will you find the reasons of the few-not meaning thereby the novelties of sophists at variance with tradition—accepted as more worthy than the voices of the many, that is, of the multitude under the delusion of a temporary excitement? Where will you find wisdom studied, traditionally handed down, and esteemed for its own sake? The learned author of the "New Cratylus" complains of men allowing special or professional knowledge to assume the honours which are due to general education. He remarks, "that the training of an individual for some particular calling is not an education of man as such; that the better a man is educated professionally the less is he a man. Yes," he adds, "to use the words of an able American writer, 'the planter, who is man sent out into the fields to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sinks into the farmer and is not man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the nature of his craft. The lawyer becomes a statute-book, the mechanic a machine." Here, however, we may remark, that in general the lower classes are in a position more favourable to wisdom, in the true sense of the term, than those who exercise the learned professions; and, accordingly, we never find that the former attempt any systematic separation between their virtue as men, -with which we shall presently observe all true wisdom must be combined,—and their business maxims of daily life. "Law and friendship do not agree," says the Sage of Lincoln's Inn. Each learned profession has its rules of etiquette, which neither love, nor any sentiment allied with wisdom, is ever to break through. Addison, "whose humanity is without a parallel in literary history," made a law to himself when in office, as Swift has recorded, never to remit his regular fees in civility to his friends. "For," said he, "I may have a hundred friends; and, if my fee be two guineas, I shall, by relinquishing my right, lose two hundred guineas, and no friend gain more than two; there is, therefore, no proportion between the good imparted, and the evil suffered." Every one knows in like manner that the same character belongs to the modern Hippocrates, as the etiquette of physicians must not yield to personal feelings; whereas, in the classes of society more favourable to the Catholic appreciation of wisdom, nothing of this kind is discernible. When do we ever hear a carpenter or mason, a boatman or a gardener's boy, seeking to excuse their breach of any of the natural virtues, by alleging the custom or philosophy of their trade? Who ever heard them say, that friendship does not

agree with sawing timber, or rowing a boat, or carrying a hod, or moving a wheelbarrow? When professional learning is deemed supreme, the most hateful consequences follow: and it was for this reason, as the same author remarks, that the clearheaded Greeks denied the name of education, παιδεία, to that which is learned, not for its own sake, but for the sake of some extrinsic gain, and distinguished formally between those studies which they called liberal and those which were merely professional \*. Certainly, Plato, speaking on this subject, does not mince his words. "Any system," he says, "of education, directed towards gaining riches, or force of body, or any thing whatever unconcerned with wisdom and justice, is a base and servile education, and not worthy to bear the name of education —βάνανσόν τ' είναι καὶ ἀνελεύθερον, καὶ οὐκ ἀξίαν τοπαράπαν παιδείαν καλεῖσθαι †." Now it can be observed by all, that in the modern civilization, so far as it is formally opposed to Catholicism, very little is thought of studies which have not for object the advancement of the individual in some profession. You speak of proficiency in philosophic studies, understood as in the sense of Plato: "Magnus honos," it is replied, "sed schola tenus." Every one seems of the opinion of the chorus: "What a sad thing to be wise in cases where it does not pay to be wise!"

> Φεῦ, φεῦ φρονεῖν ώς δεινὸν ἔνθα μὴ τέλη λύει φρονοῦντι‡.

"Now, when this busy world cannot attend The untimely music of neglected lays, Other delights than these, other desires, This wiser profit-seeking age requires."

"It becometh not a man to praise himself," says one in a famous comedy; "but I may say that my knowledge hath stood me in better stead at a pinch than could all the goods in the world. By reading, counsailing, and pleading, within twenty years I have gathered and gained as good as ten thousand ducats. Yea, marry, this is the right knowledge; philosophy, poetry, logick, and all the rest, are but pigling sciences in comparison to this."

"The trade of law doth fill the boisterous bags, They swim in silk when others roist in rags."

O excellent verse! Sure, whosoever wrote it, the moral is ex-

\* P. 7. 

† De Legibus, lib. i. 

† CEd. Tyr. 316.

cellent, and worthy to be written in letters of gold." But it is needless to pursue these contrasts: daily experience will suffice. The fact is, that studies, in the ancient sense, are every day less and less pursued: and no wonder; since the whole admiration of men seems at times directed to other objects. Within the Palace of Industry, as it is termed,—the Crystal Palace—which now attracts the world, -who cares-I do not say for Christian sages-but even for Socrates or Plato, for Virgil or Homer, unless it be to explain the device upon a foreign tea-cup? And how fares wisdom in the abstract? Where is its dignity? With the rise of the new opinions in religion, every one knows that the veneration for learning, and for that true wisdom which had in all previous ages been esteemed, underwent a decline. We find the fact attested in our dramatic literature. Thus, in the "Return from Parnassus," the Recorder and the Knight agree in expressing scorn for all scholars, saving,-

"A chair, a candle, and a tinder-box,
A thatched chamber, and a ragged gown
Should be their lands and whole possessions;
Knights, lords, and lawyers should be lodged and dwelt
Within those over-stately heaps of stone,
Which doting sires in old age did erect."

"Well, it were to be wished that never a scholar in England might have above forty pound a-year. 'Faith, Master Recorder, if it went by wishing, there should never an one of them all have above twenty a-year; a good stipend, a good stipend, Master Recorder: in the meantime, howsoever, I hate them all deadly."

The fact is, that instead of honour, and even popular reverence, men eminent for wisdom then experienced contempt or indifference, their unappreciated qualities being even in many instances turned into matter of ridicule and mockery by the insolence of rank and wealth. And even to this hour, if you explore the domains of Protestantism, you will find that often there "the learned pate"—be it said without offence—"ducks to the golden fool, and all is oblique." The professor or tutor is there described by those who knew him best as one

But honeying at the whisper of a lord \*."

There you find, moreover, wisdom itself so little valued or understood, that the best expedient is thought to be a systematic divorce between faith and reason; philosophy itself,

<sup>\*</sup> Tennyson.

that which is true and consistent with faith, being despised and renounced by some; as Leibnitz observes\*, "human reason being exalted and degraded by turns without rule or measure."

But take another view. Can it be unfair to suggest, that wisdom must be despised by persons who have for maxim, that a man of honour never changes his religion?-adage invented, as the Count de Maistre says, for the sake of tranquillizing the conscience, and which he so justly qualifies as an absurdity and a blasphemy. A man who should undertake the engagement that it involves in human sciences would be sent to Bedlam. But what name can be given to him who so pledges himself in regard to Divine truths? What respect for wisdom can exist when the rule in regard to them is the degree of longitude and latitude, and the law of the state under which men live? What respect for wisdom, again, can be claimed by a society, which suffers religious truth to be actually regulated by Acts of Parliament, or by any expression of the civil government? "No prince has ever conceived the idea to enforce obedience to his will in mathematics; but, in the science of religion, this is what is imagined and resolved †." What respect for wisdom can exist when men turn to national or generic religions-speaking each but one language, like Bouddhism, which speaks only Chinese; Bramism, which speaks only Sanscript; Mahometanism, which speaks only Arabic; Lutheranism, which speaks only German; Anglicanism, which speaks only English, and that only for the last three hundred years—and fly from Catholicism, which alone speaks all languages, preaching the same doctrines in the tongues of every people under heaven? But supposing renounced all these inconsistencies, still, within Protestant and Rationalist domains, you very frequently find either society too much embroiled by civil and religious strife to attend to wisdom,—as when Milton, who saw the natural results of the new opinions more fully developed than we at present do, said, "It were a folly to commit any thing elaborately composed to the careless and interrupted listening of these tumultuous times,"-or men so constantly hurrying about after pleasure or profit, that it were an equal folly to call them to any study but what could be subservient to such locomotive propensities. If any one should apply himself as Leibnitz desires, -invoking, indeed, a more tranquil age and country than his own,-to draw from history what he says is most useful in it, namely, extraordinary examples of virtue, composing, as it were, a kind of universal history, only containing things of this kind, and some few others of consequence, relative to the policy of peace and

† Count de Maistre's Letters, ii. 378.

<sup>\*</sup> Discourse on the Conformity of Faith and Reason, 13.

war\*, his volumes would be stigmatised as tedious, and unworthy of being read through. Quis leget, hæc? vel duo vel nemo. To live without newspapers on the other hand—journals by which every speech, "though it were piped of a mouse," as Chaucer says, must needs go to the house of fame—will, under the same predominant influence, seem to be impossible; and one will be hardly able to conceive how mankind could have lived without them till so lately, when they were first invented. Here you have the man

---- " amens animi, et rumore accensus amaro."

For that fame which Virgil calls impious, even when it tells the truth or attests a fact †, fulfils its ancient character.

"Fama, malum quo non aliud velocius ullum; Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo, Tam ficti pravique tenax quam nuntia veri. Hæe tum multiplici populos sermone replebat Gaudens, et pariter facta atque infecta canebat ‡."

A torrent of ephemeral productions supplies the ravenous appetite of the public with a mental sustenance, which answers the wants of the moment, as the bakers' ovens supply the body; "both furnishing a food which is all devoured, and meant to be devoured, as fast as it is produced, being in no respect intended

for posterity."

Under such discouraging circumstances, wisdom may look back with fond regret to times when it used to be said every where, "Rumores novitates et quæcunque curiosum animum oblectant et variis imaginibus cor depictum infectumque desideriis relinquunt neque legere neque audire consentias \( \)." But such considerations would be set down by the public under the new influence, as the desire of men who would keep the world in a state of childhood. To live without the daily excitement of letters, also, as when there were only forest messengers—" Wald-Boten," as the Germans called them—would seem-whatever poets, like Wordsworth, might think-equally intolerable. Nor can it hardly be believed that, so late as in the time of Addison, the post left London only three days in the week; and that for a population of 19,000 inhabitants, as in Pampeluna, there should be still only the same provision for The result of all this excitement is not favourable to the progress of men on this road. To talk of seeking wisdom in a community intent, almost without exceptions, on business

<sup>\*</sup> Nouveaux Essais, iv.

<sup># &#</sup>x27;Æn. iv. 174.

<sup>+</sup> Æn. iv. 298.

<sup>§</sup> Joan. Lanspergius, Epist.

or dissipations in the sphere of the intelligence, is to make oneself only ridiculous. If you would absolutely win attention by books, you must, in some way or other, seem to contribute to such works as Statius praises, when extolling the new Via Domitiana, saying,—

> "At nunc, quæ solidum diem terebat, Horarum via facta vix duarum\*."

Or you must provide at least for the amusement of those who travel by the aid of modern sage enchanters, mounted on chariots of fire; or on new winged clavilenos, governed by a peg, which fly with such swiftness, that one would think the demon himself carried them,—being to-day here, to-morrow in France, and the next day in Potosi. Books themselves must be light and portable, and in both a moral and material sense adapted for "the rail:" for, as the chorus charges Œdipus with leaving the place in which he was before from mere caprice, so its words might be applied to many now. Where is the most unsatisfied, most place-changing of men?—

Ποῦ κυρεῖ ἐκτόπιος συθείς, ὁ πάντων, ὁ πάντων ἀκορέστατος †;

But lest we should seem inclined to speak ill of any enchanter, let us leave these, and by an easy passage proceed from the Protestant domain to its neighbouring confines. Here we find rationalism maintaining with the patriarch of its ally that philosophy contradicts theology. Here we shall find all studies neglected but such as tend to the material interests of this life; and as for wisdom, in the ancient moral and religious sense of the word, we can observe an avowed contempt, and even hatred for it, which recalls the manners of barbarians, when it could be truly said, in the words of Alanus Magnus, stigmatizing them, "Jam omnis scientia vilet, omnis lectio torpet; non est qui legat libros, non est usque ad unum. Jam deserta est schola Christi quæ in duobus versatur, in vita et doctrina; sed vera vita contemnitur, doctrina sepelitur. Olim et si bona vita non amabatur, doctrina tamen amplectebatur: sed jam summa est exorbitatio, summa obstinatio, summa alienatio, cum non solum mores boni postponuntur, sed etiam decor eorum, id est, doctrina, contemnitur ‡." Here, "a theory built on the bones of the Mammoth or the Ichthyosaurus is living science:" one resting on the dictum, "In the beginning God created the

<sup>\*</sup> Sylv. lib. iv. + Œd. Col, 120.

<sup>#</sup> Summa de Arte Prædicat. c. 36.

heaven and the earth;" or that other, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us;" is dead literature \*.

"What have I to do," demands one of the modern guides, "with arks and passovers? what with heave-offerings and unleavened bread? Good for Orientals, these are nothing to me. The more learning you bring to explain them, the more glaring the impertinence. My learning is such as God gave me in my birth and habit, in the delight and study of my eyes, and not of another man's. Let no foreigner seek to amuse me with pelican and stork instead of thrush and robin; palm-trees and shittim-wood instead of sassafras and hickory." So the new barbarism completes the work of isolation begun by Protestantism. The Protestant theologians broke with the Christian mediæval traditions; the Rationalists renounce the Jewish and primæval traditions of wisdom; and henceforth men have no esteem for other intellectual riches but those of scientific knowledge, and the philosophy which yields them farthing candles in succession, as each fails to supply what they deem the deficiencies of the sun.

But, having thus briefly noticed the signal furnished by the esteem of wisdom observable in the Catholic Church, and the decline of all love for it elsewhere, unless where it exists as a rare exception, let us proceed to mark the issues to the Church that are effected by wisdom itself, of which the first may be considered as the result of right reason guiding men who study moral truth. Catholicism, while holding all knowledge of religious truth to be derived from revelation and tradition, has exalted views respecting the natural capabilities of man. "Nihil est superius mente humana," says St. Bonaventura, "nisi solus ille qui fecit eam †." "Some have inferred," remarks Leibnitz, "from the dictionary of Bayle, that our reason is more capable of refuting and destroying than of proving and establishing; insomuch that, if one were to follow it in a spirit of dispute as far as it will go, we should find ourselves embarrassed in philosophical and theological subjects, and that it combats truth with objections that cannot be solved. continues the philosopher-whose wisdom drew him every day more and more towards Catholicity-" I believe that what is said to blame reason is to its advantage: when it destroys any thesis, it establishes the contrary; and, when it seems to destroy two opposite theses, it is that it promises us something more profound, provided we follow it as far as it will go, -not in a spirit of dispute, but with an ardent desire to seek and to disengage truth ‡." Catholicism no doubt supposes reason to be inefficient

<sup>\*</sup> Dublin Review, lxii. 552.

<sup>+</sup> Itinerar. Mentis in Deum, c. 3.

without external revelation to guide it in the first instance; but it seeks not to depreciate the excellence of the gift. It fully recognizes the advantage to be derived from its legitimate use. True, as we have observed, those who follow this great road will try to break off right and left from the true direction; but let them weary themselves. "All this," as the Count de Maistre says, "comes to us, but by a spiral, resulting from an attraction towards the centre, and from the continual action of pride, strong without being equal, which draws them as much as it can from the right line\*."

On the reasonableness of Catholicity, and the conformity of faith with reason, we can only cast a passing glance. St. Augustine, to whose work, "De Utilitate Credendi," Leibnitz refers those who do not recognize the importance of yielding to authority in certain cases, remarks, that faith is mental health-Fides est sanitas mentis. In this respect the forest may represent the aptitude of the soul for its development; for the woods are not like the fields, requiring perpetual labour and fresh expense after every harvest. "The woods," as Varenne-Fenille observes, "cost little, and have need of being replanted so rarely, that one may say nature does every thing for them; scarcely does art lend them any assistance, and even this art consists chiefly in preventing nature from being impeded †." Men who reject faith are intellectually impeded and diseased. Men who yield to the prejudices of early instruction falsely inspired, and to the force of habit, are sometimes heard regretting that they cannot be, as they say, happily mad enough as to taste the joys of Catholic devotions; or, if they do for a moment participate in them, they speak of it as the rapture of a dream, and of their relapse to obduracy as the return of health. "Oh! most sweet religion," exclaims the author of " Eothen," describing his visit to the sanctuary of Nazareth, "that bid me fear God, and be pious, and yet not cease from loving religion and gracious custom, which commanded me that I fall down loyally and kiss the rock that blessed Mary pressed. With a half consciousness-with the semblance of a thrilling hope that I was plunging deep into my first knowledge of some most holy mystery-I knelt, and bowed down my face till I met the smooth rock with my lips. One moment-one more-and then-the fever had left me. I rose from my knees. I felt hopelessly sane. The mere world re-appeared." What a pernicious philosophy, thus to mistake a momentary recovery of mental health, or at least a symptom of approaching recovery, for madness, and a recurrence of prejudice and intellectual weakness for a return

<sup>\*</sup> Letters, i. 75.

<sup>†</sup> Mém. sur l'Administ. Forestière, i. 6.

to a sane mind! Reason would have suggested that it is health which is delightful and hopeful; and that it is sickness which is without rapture and hope. A man of strong judgment is one who cannot be imposed upon by his feelings, whether painful or agreeable, to act contrary to reason. A man of weak judgment is a man whose judgment has not sufficient strength to dissipate the clouds of error which intercept the view of the centre, towards which his reason itself would direct him if he used it; but,

"Sicut Facultas et Actus, Sic different intellectus Et intelligentia \*."

Men who end by rejecting Catholicity are thought to have deliberated upon the evidence in its favour with perfect impartiality, and the indifference of the ass between two equal portions of hay; but, as a philosopher observes, there will be always many things in the ass and out of the ass, though they may not appear, which will determine it to proceed to one side rather than to the other; and man, notwithstanding his reason, is in the same condition. Besides, what is no less true, "men are liable to the misfortune," as Leibnitz says, "of becoming disgusted with reason itself, and weary of light; chimeras return and please better." But remove all early prejudice and all worldly interest from the paths which lead in a central direction—let the resistance of the passions cease—and what is the character of the mind that rejects Catholicism? Assuredly it is not a man to whom an oracle would adjudge the tripod.

Catholicism demands from man nothing but his reasonable service; and the act of submission itself which is required is an act of highest reason. "Die mihi," said the Divine voice to St. Bridget, "quid invenisti in verbis meis quod conscientia tua non dictabat tibi faciendum? Aut nunquid aliquid præcepi tibi contra rationem†?" And again, another time, she heard, "Nunquid invenisti in verbis meis aliquid reprehensibile secundum cor tuum vel falsum?" and she replied, No, truly; "quia omnia sunt secundum rationem‡." Accordingly, we find philosophers like Leibnitz, without being formally of the Church, concluding their account of different religious and philosophic opinions by deciding in favour of the Catholic doctrines, though they may not name them as such, but only say with him, that, "generally speaking, it seems more reasonable, and more judicious, to hold to these views in opposition to those of men who contradict

<sup>\*</sup> Doct. Angel. Sum. Rhyth. Synopsis, i.

<sup>+</sup> Rev. S. Birgittæ, lib. i. c. 4.

them\*." "How pleasant is it," says the Count de Maistre, remarking the concordance between philosophy and the Catholic doctrines, "to see Plato, my philosopher, collaring Protestantism with such vigour †!" Then, alluding to Leibnitz, he says, "that we have witnessed a phenomenon still more remarkable than Plato giving evidence against Protestantism; for we have seen the greatest of Protestants coming forth from his tomb, and confessing in face of the universe, by an autograph testimony, that he died a Catholic. Is not this," he asks, "sufficient to make dissidents reflect ‡?" It has been remarked by others, that Franklin, in regard to the conduct of the mind, finds himself on the very road trodden by St. Ignatius of Loyola V. Follow the Church through all her doctrines one by one; and, when misrepresentations are exposed, the wise will find that those doctrines are the deepest, plainest, highest, clearest, the most natural, the most popular; and that her decree is, in point of fact.

"The voice most echoed by consenting men."

So that we may say with one who, perhaps, only wanted opportunity to embrace it, "Omnes philosophi omnium disciplinarum, nisi quos a recta ratione natura vitiosa detorsisset hoc eodem

animo esse potuerunt | ."

Reason might suggest what is authoritatively promulgated by Catholicity even in regard to discipline. Thus, in the old poem of Langland, in the fourteenth century, directed against the vices of the age, without including any doctrine in its blame, it is reason personified, which is represented preaching penance; though, indeed, we may remark that, when proceeding forth to preach through the realm, he has a cross carried before him, to intimate that, according to the Catholic doctrine, reason must be sanctified by holy manners. But, in regard to the pure intelligence, Catholicism only demands a clear stage as modern combatants say, a man who can truly affirm of himself,-

"Quid verum atque decens curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum "."

Plato relates in Lysis, that Hipparchus erected a column in the midst of one of the squares of Athens, on which was this inscription: στεῖχε, δικαιοφούνων—Go on, thinking justly. Surely it might be well if we had such a column in each of our cities, and that men would comply with its invitation: for only let a man obey this injunction, and the intellectual temptations to

<sup>\*</sup> Théodicée, Partie iii.

<sup>‡</sup> Lettres, i. 79.

II Tuscul. v.

<sup>+</sup> Lettres, i. 73.

Etudes sur les Idées, &c., ii. 188.

<sup>¶</sup> Horace, Epist. i.

leave the roads which lead to Catholicity will not be effectual to withdraw his steps. He may be betrayed by wizard passions to decline in practice for a moment from the way, but in mind and intellectually never. Let him go on thinking justly, and neither the pride of the eyes, nor the pride of life, will form an obstacle to stop him; since, when surrounded with all objects that minister to them, he will feel with Warner, that,

"Lacked we all those toys and terms it were no grief but joy;"

or, as Pliny recommends, he will think with himself, when he hears the price of such things, and sees such surprising works, Quam sine his multorum fuerit beatior vita\*! Let him go on thinking justly, and he will not approve and condemn the same things, merely for the reason that Protestantism or Catholicism presents them to him. If, like the pilgrim in a famous allegory, which forms one of the most popular books in England, he praises the pious picture on a wall, and the effects of beholding it-admires the cross upon the highway, and the representation of the holy sepulchre, acknowledging how profitable is the sight of both-if, like him, he approves of those who show such relics as that pilgrim was led to revere, things used by the servants of God of old-if he feels, like him, impressed by the ancient monuments which attest miraculous events in times past, and calls them "seasonable sights"-if he avails himself of such pillars as the pilgrim says were erected by former pilgrims to guide to heaven those who should come after them, and recognizes with him the value of reading what befell the holy and the good, then he will not deem contrary to wisdom the doctrine and practice of Catholics respecting holy pictures, and crosses, relics, and ex votos, commemorative inscriptions, and the lives of saints; for Catholicism only realizes what the Protestant imaginary pilgrim is acknowledged to have seen with spiritual advantage.

Thinking justly as he walks, whatever road he may take through the wood of life, and whatever objects he may pass near, reason itself can thus guide him towards the centre: et in viis suis splendebit lumen. And so the Count de Maistre, endeavouring to withdraw his friend from schism, assures him that his motive is affection, and the extreme desire which he feels to see him walking with head erect upon the road, hors de

laquelle il n'y a point de raison t.

Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that it is not here as in Paradise, where—

<sup>\*</sup> Nat. Hist. lib. xxxvi. 1.

——— "light is none
Save that which cometh from the pure serene
Of ne'er disturbed ether \*."

The wood has strange fires of its own, which can deceive wanderers with dancing lights, skimming rapidly where, as on Solway Moss, mortal steps may not adventure—fearful, yet somewhat beautiful; for the ignis fatuus assumes a variety of fantastic shapes, at one time resembling a globe of fire, at another a flickering light, at another a pale ghastly form, hovering over some fatal spot, where, perhaps, whole troops of warriors once perished. There is also the shining feather moss, as in the shady recesses of the Rowter rocks, which awakens fear in those who for the first time behold a flame's gaunt green glaring before them through a thorny brake, or casting its inexplicable light within the dark extremities of damp caves, glimmering like a fairy lamp, and bewitching men towards it.

In these respects we can trace an analogy in the forest of life, where men are liable to meet bewildering meteors; following

which, some through madness

"Frame strange conceits in their discoursing brains, And prate of things as they pretend they are."

But reason can distinguish them from every safe light intended for man's use. A devil, says the poet,

"Is a rare juggler, and can cheat the eye But not corrupt the reason, in the throne Of a pure soul,"

Reason can be employed in leading wanderers through the nebulous region to acquiesce in the strict and limpid logic of Catholicism. Reason can point out what would be the consequences, for instance, of substituting private judgment for authority, or the doctrines and protestations of Luther and Calvin for the rule of faith and the usages and discipline of Catholicity; for it can teach men to beware of an unsure foundation, since no fair colours can fortify a building faintly jointed, resting upon sand. It can lead men, therefore, to the Church by that forethought and power of foreseeing evils, which is so necessary for the highest purposes. Scipio Africanus used to say that it was shameful in military affairs to reply "non putaram;" and, in relation to the soul and spiritual interests, wise men would hold it as a no less insufficient apology, to say that a man never

thought that such and such consequence would follow. They will use Dantæan words, and say,—

"Let not the people be too swift to judge,
As one who reckons on the blades in field,
Or e'er the crop be ripe \* "

When false wisdom promises a futurity of unparalleled good, right reason answers,—

"Swear not by time to come; for that thou hast Misused ere used, by times ill used o'er past."

Right reason, again, sensible of the bounds to which its exercise is limited, sends men to faith to supply its own deficiencies, saying, with voice as audible as that which Dante heard in the regions of bliss,—

"If thus, whate'er by learning men attain,
Were understood, the sophist would want room
To exercise his wit +."

Dante, therefore, even while in Paradise, recognizes the guidance which reason can supply, and says,—

"Philosophy hath arguments
And this place hath authority enough
To imprint in me such love; for, of constraint,
Good, inasmuch as we perceive the good,
Kindles our love; and in degree the more,
As it comprises more of goodness in 't.
The essence then, where such advantage is,
That each good found without it is nought else
But of his light the beam, must needs attract
The soul of each one ‡."

In the Epinomis Plato shows that the true manner of studying the sciences is to seek in them always unity, in order to discern at last how all things are united in one. It is the same with all branches of human knowledge; and from a neglect of this principle men have observed that almost every intellectual employment has a tendency to produce some intellectual malady, the disease arising from the habit of taking a partial and an exaggerated view of some one subject to the prejudice of others by a consideration of which it ought to be affected. Right reason cannot, therefore, but incline towards that centre where the very name Catholic, from  $\kappa \alpha \tau \delta$ , circa, and  $\delta \lambda o \nu$ , totum, promises the satisfaction and the assistance which it seeks; and

<sup>\*</sup> Par. 13.

that the Church perfectly fulfils the definition expressed by its name no one who has studied its doctrines can entertain a doubt. "The Church," says a remarkable writer, "instead of cutting off and extirpating as sceptics do, unites, and so corrects; connecting all dispositions, it conducts them to God-uniting ideas which Plato says are in nature as models, of which things are the copies, it makes of them a road which leads to truth. Reason, under that guidance, would, in Dante, send you to the invisible world; in Ariosto, to the search of secondary causes; in Petrarch, to the science of eternal love; in Shakspear, to the instruction of life; in Rousseau, to the search of the original type under the name of nature; in Fielding, to the appreciation of a generous and manly character; in Byron, to the horror of doubt; in Schiller, to the love of beauty, in essence and in form. What more extraordinary than the spirit of the Church, which, acting in an inverse order to all human institutions, instead of placing itself on the side of one idea against another, receives all that are true alike, and wills not death, but life; wills that nothing true should be destroyed, nothing that rises in the intelligence, and establishes constantly its dogmas and its law on two contrary ideas, which form an equilibrium and sustain truth, which weigh one against the other and support virtue. Cite a human society which has not made the idea which it defends an instrument of death for the idea which it attacks, and which has been for nineteen centuries the champion of all true ideas scattered through the world, teaching that truth springs from the equilibrium between two contrary ideas, that these ideas received as parallel form virtue, isolated constitute vice \*." There are men so intent and ardent in pursuing some one error, that they grow at last morbidly susceptive in regard to whatever they read or hear, and convinced that the same error contaminates all works. But Catholicism would discountenance such critics, and impart to them a wiser judgment; saying with the poet,-

"Yet shun their fault, who, scandalously nice, Will needs mistake an author into vice; All seems infected that th' infected spy, As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye."

"In Rome," says Pierre Matthieu, "more than in any other part of the world, each thing has different biases and different lights;" by which he means that the same thing is seen on different sides, and in all points of view. Catholicity, by this

<sup>\*</sup> Études sur les Idées et sur leur union au sein du Catholicisme, tom. ii.

<sup>+</sup> Hist. de Hen. IV. liv. vii.

unity and combination of ideas, attracts the wise; for as Simplicius savs in his commentary on Epictetus, "hoc disciplinam morum omnem continet, se conjungere universo, et unum cum eo esse velle; non autem ab universo sese avellentem, et in angustias ac potius ad nihilum redactum universo repugnare; et velle ut universum, partem tam vilem sequatur." In point of fact, notwithstanding the holy jealousy with which every article of faith is guarded, it will be found generally that religious Catholics are men who have their minds more exercised in receiving all kinds of ideas, more susceptible of all forms, more indulgent for human weakness, more disposed to favourable interpretations, and more industrious to discover them, than those who accuse the Church of illiberality, and arrogate freedom of thought exclusively to themselves. It is men who imbibe her charity that learn best to cultivate that equity, that impartiality, and that moderation, which constitute the force and the charm of the highest intellectual society. The Count Joseph de Maistre, for instance, so inflexible in his principles. and so uncompromising in his expressions, was nevertheless, we are assured, in his social relations kind affable, and of great tolerance. We are told that "he used to listen with calmness to the opinions most opposed to his own, and to combat them with cool self-possession and courtesy without the least harshness; that he loved to consider men on the side which was praiseworthy, and that wherever he remained any while he left friends, at Lausanne and St. Petersbourg, as well as at Rome and Florence."

It is the sophists who, treading in the footsteps of the first generations of Protestants, play that part in the forest of life which is discharged by the larch and pines in nature, excluding from the soil all but themselves. "The larch," says M. de Malesherbes, "though itself most delicate in the beginning, is intolerant, if I may use such an expression. In woods of larch there are no great herbs or bushes at their feet, as in woods of oak or beech. Pines and fir are also intolerant. The fir will not live even with the epicia, nor the maritime pine with the wood pine." All mountaineers remark the intolerance of these trees, which is attested by Haller and Pallas. accounts for the fact that the larch is never found in Switzerland, except as the last tree on the highest mountains; for if the seed carried by the winds should fall among the pines, who are its next neighbours, the intolerant pines will not suffer them to establish themselves. If they fall lower down, it will be in woods of oak, which is not an intolerant tree; but these woods are full of brambles and thorns, and bushes of raspberries and nuts, amidst which so delicate a plant as the young larch cannot grow up. Here is a symbol of the wisdom which results from

heresy and infidelity. For what is the universal law of all who renounce Catholicity? They begin by demanding liberty and space for themselves to grow up in. They are delicate, like the tender larch, so that even the sweet fruits of Catholicity, like the nuts and raspberries, would be fatal to them. They ask only freedom; that once attained, they declare that Catholics must depart, and they banish them, retaining exclusive possession of the ground for their own cold, naked, uniform shade. "Libertas et speciosa nomina prætexuntur," says Tacitus, as if he had witnessed the rise and growth of modern parties, "nec quisquam alienum servitium et dominationem sibi concupivit, ut non eadem ista vocabula usurparet \*."

Catholicity, we may remark in general, is in consequence far more favourable to the progress of high intellectual studies than any system which unrolls a different banner, though it certainly distinguishes between a real proficiency and mere verbal pretensions, as when St. Hildegarde saw that tower of wisdom not yet finished, but at which the men of each generation work incessantly; the men of speculative science vainly agitating themselves at the foot of the edifice, going and coming,

but never entering, while men of practice entered it.

Again, disproportioned thoughts, which belong not to the wise, lead men to the eccentric paths of heresy and error. The old adage says,—

"Homme angulaire est à vérité contraire."

Whereas the man who retains a just proportion in his thoughts, and in the exercise of his faculties, will be attracted by that harmony between imagination and judgment which Catholicism produces, rendering him sensible, as Leibnitz says, that "there may be sometimes judgment in not employing it too much;" the angular man may speak in good English, but it will not be with good sense,—

"His judgment just, his sentence is too strong; Because he's right, he's ever in the wrong."

Or it may be said of his discourse,—bene Latine, parum plane. Rationalism, with which such men sympathize, produces, in the moral forest cold fogs, which produce the same effect that the frosty vapours of the winter cause among the trees. In woods, the moisture suspended in the air attaches itself with such profusion round the branches, that they cannot resist the weight; and a similar injury in the intellectual forest results from the pestilential clouds which accompany the false philosophy of the

sophists, seeking to deceive others and themselves with misty words which convey no distinct idea. Right reason desires that temperate, moderate, and at the same time that lucid and exact philosophy which Catholicism involves, imparting discretion and clearness, even to the style, as was expressed in the epitaph on Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the words,—

## "Limpida discipulis dogmata disseruit \*."

It desires what Solon told Crœsus, "that the Greeks had received from God an inheritance that might be qualified as mediocrity; a firm, simple, popular wisdom." Consequently, it will be offended by that modern rationalist style which characterizes the graver productions of the Protestants and Philosophers of this age, whose imperative sentences are more obscure than Plato's numbers; for as a great author says, "our age constitutes the fourth epoch of the rationalist's philosophy, being that of deceptions. In the sixteenth century, the rationalist wisdom effected its separation from religion, which is the first stage. In the seventeenth, it devoted itself to discussion, to examine, to try to discover. The eighteenth was the age of negation of atheism; and in the nineteenth, fatigued and alarmed, it seeks to delude the world, and to delude itself, by turning to a philosophic mysticism, and to pantheism.

The secret of the modern style is, to substitute serious fathomless words for profound things. The depth is in the language, not in the thoughts; or we might say that it consists in the trick of appearing always to have higher and truer views than those presented to the reader. Perhaps, however, it rather takes its character from the fact that the writer himself, who believes in nothing, hastens to destroy as fast as he conceives, and will suffer no idea, even of his own, to come into life. Right reason will not be imposed upon by this pretensious manner. It may at first be staggered at its boldness, but after a little reflection it will discern, under the pompous clothing of the rhetorician, the poverty and nakedness that is so

wrapped up.

Again; right reason, subduing all abrupt, empty, discordant extravagance, points to the centre in Catholicism where the law of continuity is observed. There it discerns how every pause is filled with under-notes, clear, silver, piercing; how there is that which keeps awakening tones that penetrate the sense, and live within the soul; how it is there that we "may talk until thought's melody becomes too sweet for utterance," and yet be all the while secured from the delusions of a dreamy,

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<sup>\*</sup> Ant. de Yepes, Chron. Gen. Ord. S. Bened. ii. 398.

indistinct philosophy. Moreover, as we shall soon observe more fully, there is attraction in the general convictions which faith involves. Catholicism invites men to pursue a path of thought trodden, no doubt, by multitudes before them; but the forest itself can tell what is gained by desiring to wander where no track is worn: for through ancient woods, if you take no path, though you may start a hare or see a serpent, you will soon repent of following your wild taste, for nothing is more wearisome than treading on the deep, dry, dead leaves that cover all the ground; and after all, the monotony of the dense wilderness is not so pleasing as the vistas of the more open way; besides that, the very path itself constitutes a particular beauty in the scene. Mark how the little worn track winds dexterously round the hard, intricate roots, avoids every obstacle, indulges even your desire of solitude, by keeping the main road out of sight, and yet all the while steadily preserves the true direction. So it is in the forest of thought, where men follow the Catholic path which has been marked out in conformity with the eternal principles of reason. Accordance with these forms another characteristic of Catholicism which attracts the wise.

"Thoughts," says St. Gregory, "are subjected to reason as handmaidens; and if reason depart for a moment from the house, as if in the absence of the mistress, a clamour of thoughts, like a chattering of a crowd of servants, arises; but when reason returns to the mind, it restrains the tumultuous confusion, and, like maidens, these thoughts return silently to perform their respective services." The old adage expressed this in the lines.—

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"Se tu ne mets raison en toy Mesure l'i mettra de soy; Se tu l'i metz, tu es sauvez, S'elle s'i met, tu es dampnez."

According to St. Thomas, "right reason ought to regulate all the things which man desires naturally; the will, when it is directed by right reason, turns towards what is proper and proportioned to the conditions of each; then one desires and loves virtuously; but when the appetite wills and desires more without right reason, then one desires and loves viciously, and thence follow all vices." "Besides the judgment of the understanding," says Leibnitz, "of which we have an express knowledge, there are mixed up many confused perceptions, which give rise to passions, and also insensible inclinations, which we do not always perceive. These movements often traverse the judgment, which can be changed by a new perception; and hence it is that our soul has so many means of resisting the truth which

it knows: the relation, therefore, between the judgment and the will, is not so necessary as one might suppose \*." Such is the natural condition of the human mind; but within the domain of Catholicism we see daily proof that the judgment is delivered from the obscurity of such delusions. "There is in all the just," says Cardinal Bona, "the habit of wisdom, which is a gift of the Holy Ghost †."

Reason, if unprejudiced, can perceive that this inestimable advantage is conferred by Catholicity on those who practise it.

—— "For, through the universe, Wherever merited, celestial light Glides freely, and no obstacle prevents ‡."

What steady reason in the schoolmen! how keen and wise are they! "Study the volumes of St. Thomas," says Antonio de Escobar; "read the titles, attend to the questions, note the apposition of points, and you will see how each little twig abounds with fruit §." Leibnitz would agree with the Spanish theologian, in admiring the scholastic philosophy, which, as even Goethe says, "has always the merit of propounding in order, according to received axioms, and under fixed rubrics, every thing about which men can at all inquire." But, without confining our observations to any age, remark the sound sense and admirable direction of all the varieties of intelligence which exist within the Church. These Catholic authors have all their distinctive qualities. St. Thomas is more concise; St. Bernard, more abundant; Bossuet, more splendid; De Rancè, more austere; St. Bruno, more grave; St. Jerome, more vehement; Fenelon, more tender: the Count de Maistre, more forcible: "Omnes tamen," to use the words of a great master, "eandem sanitatem ferunt; ut si omnium pariter libros in manum sumpseris, scias, quamvis in diversis ingeniis, esse quandam judicii ac voluntatis similitudinem et cognationem ||." To the Catholic schools will, in fact, be attracted, more or less, those who desire to conform to the prayer, which asks for grace to be occupied always with reasonable things, and who seek a secure and solid foundation for their convictions; according to the advice of St. Thomas, who, in answer to one who asked, how he could be always consoled and satisfied, replied, "when you can give a reason for what you do."

Right reason seeks accurate definition, which Cicero calls "an uncovering of hidden things ¶;" it seeks a logical deduction of consequences from just premises, and both an intellectual and

<sup>\*</sup> Théodicée, p. 111.

<sup>‡</sup> Par. 31.

<sup>||</sup> Tacitus, De Cratoribus.

<sup>+</sup> Via Compend. ad Deum, 115.

<sup>§</sup> In Evang. Comment. tom. vii. 129.

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moral consistency. With this desire, there can be no satisfaction for it in regard to some spheres of knowledge, excepting in Catholicism, where what it seeks is found in regard to religious and moral truth. So a celebrated Scotch metaphysician, being visited in his last sickness by some ministers: "Gentlemen." said he, "were I a Christian, it is not to you that I should now address myself, but to priests of the Catholic Church; for with them I find premises and a conclusion, and this I know is what you cannot offer me." Catholicism renders men intellectually consistent if faithful to its precepts, whatever be their There is no return for them possible to Paganism in philosophy, or to Judaism in religion; and they have a distinct perception of what constitutes the difference between their own wisdom and every other. Salvian, thus addressing his contemporaries, says, "Unum quamvis prius quam loqui ordiar scire cupiam-cum Christianis mihi loquendum an cum Paganis sit \* ?"

Wise men find in Catholicism consistency, not alone in philosophy and religion, but in government, in legislation, in rule, and in submission. "There are some heretics," says St. Gregory, speaking of the gifts of the Magi, "who believe Christ to be God, but do not believe Him to reign every where. These bring Him, indeed, frankincense, but they are unwilling to offer gold. Wise men remark that Catholicity alone makes offerings to God corresponding to the gifts of the Magi, proving that it is the religion of wise men, who worship Him who is God, king, and man; bringing worship for His divinity, laws for His universal reign, sympathy for His death." Protestantism, when it brings the first, deems it wrong or useless to offer the two last. His kingdom, it says, is not here; His humanity is merged in His divinity, and needs not tears.

The wise mind, conducted to the centre, by observing in general the influence of Catholicism on all departments of human knowledge, may be noticed as drawn towards it, especially by discerning, as was remarked on an earlier road, how it establishes on a true basis that part of philosophy which is concerned with law. "It is impossible," says an eminent jurisconsult, "that the doctrines of the sages of the law, and the oracles of European jurisprudence, can be presented to a cultivated and intelli-

gent mind without producing some valuable result †."

The great Catholic civilian Domat, has deduced all laws from the two fundamental rules of natural law, confirmed by express revelation, namely, the love of God, and love of our neighbour. He lays it down, that the surest way of discovering the first principles of law is to begin by two prime truths—one, that

<sup>\*</sup> De Gubernatione Dei, lib. iii. 1.

the laws of man are nothing else but the rules of his conduct; and the other, that the said conduct is nothing else but the steps which a man makes towards the end for which he was created. Wisdom leads men to perceive, that it is the Catholic doctrines which assist them in gaining comprehensive views of law and legislation; it impresses them with a sense of the importance of looking beyond the law reports of any one nation and textbooks for legal knowledge. Wise men are led to consider, that by regarding law, in the Catholic manner, as a great moral science, it is rendered the means of disciplining, strengthening, and enlarging the mind, preparing it for the performance of the highest duties of the judge and the statesman, while the narrow and pedantic cultivation of legal study have an opposite tendency. Those who desire solid principles, precise language, forcible arguments, and profound views, connected with law, recur to the treatise by St. Thomas, and there they find that this part of his sum was the mine which has been worked by Grotius and Puffendorff, Coccejus and Heineccius, while ascribing to themselves, as their own creation, the riches which they drew from it.

There is, again, a distinct department of law, emanating immediately from the Catholic Church, which cannot but arrest the attention of wise men, and engage their affections for the religion which called it forth. "One must admire," says a great civilian, "the general plan of ecclesiastical jurisprudence, the vastness of the science, the harmony and arrangement of its parts. In ecclesiastical law, you will find much that a lawyer, a judge, and a statesman should be acquainted with. No one, indeed, can deserve the name of a civilian, who is not also a canonist. For these ecclesiastical courts, where punishments never extended to loss of life, or member, or even to a pecuniary fine, have for their principal object the amendment of the criminal. In that doctrine of the canon law, that children born illegitimate, are legitimated by the subsequent marriage of their parents, there is a philosophy that cannot but attract the wise. Their admiration, too, must be won by a religion which has created a system of universal law; for while municipal laws are framed with reference to the division of mankind, into separate nations, the spirit of the laws of the Church is of a more comprehensive character; for," continues Bower, "they regard mankind in general with reference to an abstract truth, and obedience, as forming a body politic or society." Suarez lays it down, "that there is a legislative power inherent in the Catholic Church, as such; and it is therefore not confined to territorial limits, within which municipal laws are made." It will be observed, that the influence of the canon law has in many instances improved the modern civil law, by discountenancing technicalities, and by introducing more Christian and conscientious principles. "There is no doubt," continues Bower, "that the influence of the canon law contributed powerfully to place the status of the slave or serf on a footing consistent with Christian morals, and led to the extinction of that lamentable institution. The influence of the canon law was also very important and beneficial in the development of the science of jurisprudence, and the improvement of every branch of the law." Wise men, taking into account such considerations connected with law, are attracted towards Catholicity also, by observing, that it has "united and harmonized together all parts of universal jurisprudence, forming a great science, which extends to all the territorial wants and interests of men, and springs from the scheme of divine polity whereby the world is governed; so that jurisprudence here on earth is united with heaven by the golden chain of the divine law."

Another issue from the road of wise men to Catholicity, is effected by the humility which is an essential attribute of wisdom. "Pride," as the Count de Maistre says, "is the beginning not alone of sin, but also of all errors." It is this, in fact, which leads men wrong from the first, by causing them to adopt for their guide, what a great author terms, "the philosophic reason," meaning that reason which pretends to dispense with revelation, tradition, and the supernatural light of divine grace. Wise men, the more they reflect, will be convinced with St. Thomas, "that the method of this philosophy is impracticable for the immense majority of mankind-conceivable for only a very small number, leading this very small number to truth only through incalculable difficulties, never capable of attaining to truth with certainty, and finding it equally impossible to present truth without a mixture of error." They are drawn on, therefore, towards that different kind of philosophy, which, from the beginning of the world has been content with humbly, but not less rationally, seeking truth from without, by means of a divine, external, authoritative, and traditional teaching.

— "Man by his own strength to heav'n would soar, And would not be oblig'd to God for more. Vain, wretched creature, how art thou misled, To think thy wit those god-like notions bred! These truths are not the product of thy mind, But dropt from heav'n, and of a nobler kind. Reveal'd religion first inform'd thy sight, And reason saw not till faith sprung the light. Hence all thy nat'ral worship takes the source; 'Tis revelation, what thou think'st discourse \* "

In general, men of wisdom will comply with the invitation of Leibnitz, to "acquire a knowledge of their own ignorance as being infinitely greater than their knowledge, and not to complain of the deficiencies of our knowledge, since we make such little use of that which we derive from nature \*." "The philosophy of Kant," says a writer, who seeks to detect some truth in all books, "has for object the demonstration of the insufficiency of reason." Be this as it may, it is certain, that those who study true wisdom are not far from discovering the advantages of the Catholic over the philosophic reason, as well as of the Catholic doctrine respecting the duty of intellectual humility, and the reasonableness of requiring it. "We understand with labour," says St. Thomas of Villanova; "we remember with frailty; we love with instability: what toil in learning! what oblivion in remembering! what vanity in loving! This very sermon which I am delivering to you, is not the result of sudden intuition; but after many hours, and with much anxiety, I have compiled it.—Nulla major altitudo est, quam propter Deum profunda humiliatio †." "Holy men," says St. Gregory, "in order that they may guard the virtue of humility in themselves the more, when they know something admirably, study to recall before the eyes of their minds the things which they do not know, that by considering that ignorance, they may be less tempted to pride." Peter Abelard, who used to boast that he could treat on any subject, came later to estimate differently his own intellectual powers. On many subjects he would then repeat the confession which he made, when asked concerning a law in the Justinian Code, acknowledging "that he knew nothing." Accurso, who lived a hundred years after him, wrote a note to that law, in these words: "Petrus Abelardus hic dixit, nescio." The true philosopher will not be turned from Catholicity by an unwillingness to use this word in relation to many subjects which it consigns to the domain of faith; while heretics and sophists deliver them up to the contradictions of men. He has nescio on his tongue when asked to treat on the commonest things around him. "You, sir," he can often reply, "make use of many dark sentences to explain your meaning; but what I know not, you will give me leave to say I am ignorant of." "We come to speak," says Pliny, "of the food prepared by nature for the use of man,-faterique cogemus ignota esse per quæ vivat."

The affinity between wisdom and the intellectual humility inspired by the Catholic religion may be less easily recognized at present, "quum his temporibus," as Cicero said of his age,

<sup>\*</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain, lib. iv.

<sup>+</sup> De Div. Mich. Serm. 1 et 2.

"audacia pro sapientia liceat uti \*." "The mania of these philosophers," as one of their own college acknowledges, "is to deny what is, and to explain what is not." The language of the modern civilization resembles that which St. Paulinus of Aquileia proposes as forming a singular contrast with that of Christ; "for," he observes, "the demon, proud and covetous, said, 'Mea sunt flumina et ego feci ea,' whereas Christ said, with humility, 'Non possum a me ipso facere quidquam:' the demon said, 'Sicut colliguntur ova, quæ derelicta sunt, sic universam terram ego congregavi, et non fuit qui moveret pennam et aperiret os, atque ganniret; while Christ humbly said, 'Similis factus sum pellicano solitario.' When the world with the demon holds such discourse, saving, 'exsicavi vestigio pedum meorum omnes rivos aggerum t," the connexion between a humble and a profound mind can be clearly understood perhaps by the eminently wise alone; but in healthier periods, no one doubted of its existence. St. Augustin says, therefore, to one who professed to love wisdom, "Philosophiam si vere ac fideliter amasses, Christi Dei virtutem et Dei sapientiam cognovisses, nec ab ejus saluberrima humilitate, tumore inflatus, vanæ scientiæ resilisses t." In fact, the ancient philosophers themselves sometimes acknowledged the antagonism between pride and wisdom, as Plato, in the laws; and later authors, who would follow them rather than the Catholic school, are found at times to take the same view, saying, with Miltonthat "as in teaching doubtless the spirit of meekness is most powerful, so are the meek only fit persons to be taught; that as for the proud, the obstinate, they will not be taught, but they should be discovered and laid open. For how," he continues to say, "can they admit of teaching who have the condemnation of God already upon them for refusing Divine instruction, and who are filled with their own devices?" Brother Jacoponus made use of a certain dialogue to express the same thought. " Reason," according to him, "says to conscience, 'Wherefore, when I work less, do you permit me to be in peace, and formerly, when I worked much, you used to trouble me?' Conscience answers, 'Quia confidebas de ipsis operibus et sperabas in eis; unde non poteram illam falsitatem sustinere; modo vero non confidis de ipsis, nec inde expectas meritum, et ideo non murmuro nec repugno; quare non mireris \( \).""

Criticism itself, towards which literary pride so often turns with a true idolatry, has reason to invoke humility; for, left without its controlling and purifying influence, she may be described in the language of Swift, as "a malignant deity, dwell-

<sup>\*</sup> Epist. i. 10.

<sup>+</sup> Lib. Exhort. ad Henric. c. 19.

<sup>#</sup> De Civ. Dei, lib. x.

<sup>§</sup> Bucchius, Lib. Aureus Conform. Vitæ B. Francisci, &c., 79.

ing on a snowy mountain, where Momus finds her extended in her den upon the spoils of numberless volumes half devoured. At her right hand sits Ignorance, her father and husband, blind with age; at her left Pride, her mother, dressing her up in the scraps of paper herself has torn. There is Opinion, her sister, light of foot, hoodwinked, and headstrong, yet giddy and perpetually turning. About her play, her children, Noise and Impudence, Dulness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-The goddess herself has claws like a cat; her head, and ears, and voice resemble those of an ass; her teeth have fallen out before; her eyes turn inward, as if she looked only upon herself; her diet is the overflowing of her own gall; and the spleen, which serve as teats for a crew of ugly monsters, increases in bulk faster than the sucking can diminish it." Critics who, like Launoy, attacked Catholic traditions, and the popular belief, would have escaped many disgraceful falls if they had practised the humility of wisdom. "It has been well said," observes a learned writer, "and every day's experience shows it, that our ignorance is often the only cause of the difficulties which stop us on the way; and those raised by our critics who attacked the truth of the Apostleship of St. Mary Magdalen, St. Lazarus, St. Maximin, and St. Martha in Provence, are a new proof of the truth of the observation. In the time of Launov," to cite but one instance of his mistakes, "an ancient inscription relative to St. Magdalen was pronounced to be apocryphal, for the reason that one could not reconcile the date of 710 with the reign of Eudes, king of the French; and after making a more profound study of the monuments of the eighth century, the best critics, Catel and Pagi, have demonstrated that this very inscription cannot be attacked, and that it is for the history of Provence the most precious monument of the time existing \*." The people were thus, after all, in the right, while the critics who disdained them egregiously deceived themselves.

In regard to subjects of a higher nature, the need of Catholic humility is still more urgent. Burke observes, "that a mind which has no restraint from a sense of its own weakness, of its subordinate rank in the creation, and of the extreme danger of letting the imagination loose upon some subjects, may very plausibly attack every thing the most excellent and venerable; that it would not be difficult to criticize the creation itself; and that if we were to examine the Divine fabric by our ideas of reason and fitness, and to use the same method of attack by which some men have assaulted revealed religion (and we may

<sup>\*</sup> Monuments inédits sur l'Apostolat. de Ste. Madel. en Provence, tom. i. p. 704.

truly add, the Catholic Church), we might, with as good colour, and with the same success, make the wisdom and power of God in his creation appear to many no better than foolishness." Hearts the most gentle and tender will, in consequence of admitting a secret pride, sometimes rotain a violent, bitter, original, and almost mechanical hatred against all that is decided by authority; their first movement is always an exclamation—What! "Therefore," continues the Count de Maistre, addressing one of his correspondents, "I have often said to you jesting seriously that you were born a Protestant. You think that you are seeking truth; it is by no means so. You are seeking doubts, which themselves furnish a great proof against you; for as St. Augustin says, 'Doubt does not dwell in the city of God\*!"

Of course the schism which springs from a false criticism, and a proud choice, when consummated, is thought just and reasonable, and humble in the eyes of the revolted. When can you ever hear a revolt profess itself in the wrong? It would be a contradiction in terms; for, from the moment when it would say, "I am in fault, it would cease to be revolt; but this is only an additional reason for wise men to abhor it. Upon the whole, the result of pride in relation to all truth, is to lead men by degrees to that doubting castle, of which the lord is found to be the Giant Despair, from whose jurisdiction those who are wise will be the first to seek deliverance. In general, wisdom will lead men to agree with the Catholic scholastic and mystic view of the connexion between humility and philosophy; and, to conclude with the poet, that—

"Time is ne'er lost, till, in the common schools Of impudence, time meets with wilful fools."

"Noli regibus, O Samuel, dare vinum;" after citing which words Rupertus says, "Give not wisdom to the proud, lest they should drink and forget judgment, and change the cause of the children of the poor; but give wine to the sorrowful, that they may forget their poverty and their sorrow. That wine is the word of wisdom or the word of science, which, if given to kings, that is to the proud, will lead to drunkenness; for when inflated with science, they will forget judgments, and have no regard to the poor, that is, to the humble faithful of Christ. Give not such wine to such men, but give it to the humble and the poor;"

We hear a great deal in modern times about Christian know-

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres, i. 80. † Id. ii. 289. † Id. ii. 289.

ledge; for "to know, is a thing that pleaseth talkers and boasters," says an old writer, "but to do, is that which pleaseth God." Pride may be combined with proficiency in knowledge, but never with the cultivation of wisdom. "Bonum male loquitur," says St. Isidore, "qui quodcunque rectum arroganter prædicare sentitur \*." The Catholic style is characteristic of these views. "Never give your private opinion as a decisive judgment," says Renaud de Montauban to his sons, when sending them to Charlemagne's court. This maxim of the chivalrous romance was only a repetition of what the guides of Catholicism lay down. "Just men," says St. Odo, "are accustomed to propose with a certain air of doubt, what they hold to be most solid and certain, as if using the words of the infirm, and again, by a forcible sentence, to contradict the doubt of the infirm, in order that, by what they speak doubtingly, they may condescend to the infirm, and by what they teach with certainty they may draw the minds of the infirm from doubt to a solid conviction †."

There are a sort of men whose visages—

"Do cream and mantle like a standing pond, And do a wilful stillness entertain, With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit."

These persons must be alone; they resemble the walnut of Europe, which is not a forest tree. It wishes to be isolated. Injurious to those who sleep beneath its shade, it wants much air and space. You will hardly ever see it growing in the midst of woods. So these philosophers disdain to stand in agreement with other men. It is not they who would be so foolish as to pass the golden tablet found by the fisherman from one to the other, each declining, through modesty, to accept it for himself, as entitled to it by an oracular sentence, as when Thales sent it to Bias, Bias to Pittacus, and so on till it came to Solon, who offered it to Apollo . The thirst for imparting their own personal ideas as their own, characterizes the men who oppose Catholicism. Every one has heard the reply of Bayle to the Cardinal de Polignac, "I am a Protestant in the force of the term; for I protest against all truths." This is the doctrine with many. They resemble Crates, who used to be called the gate-opener, because he was always entering houses in order to protest and deliver a lecture; learned, acute, eloquent at times; conversing upon all subjects from morals to politics;

<sup>\*</sup> De Sum. Bon. ii. 29. + Mor. in Job, lib. xii. 

‡ Val. Max. lib. iv.

condemning this abuse, correcting that; reforming one custom, and banishing another; each setting himself up for a Lycurgus, "one perceives still," as Leibnitz says of Bayle, "that they have all the advantages on their side, excepting that of the real truth, or bottom of the thing. The Count de Maistre rallies them on the vanity of their own pretension to know and judge of every thing by themselves. "You are reading Fleury," he says, "but when you have finished it, I advise you to read the refutation by Marchetti; then Febronius against the See of Rome; and then, afterwards, in your quality of judge who hears both parties, the anti-Febronius of the Abbé Zaccharia; there are only eight volumes: it is nothing. But if you will believe me, madam, you must learn the Greek to know exactly what signifies this famous hegemony, which St. Irenæus ascribes to the Roman Church in the third century, to ascertain whether it means primacy or supremacy, or principality, or jurisdiction. The Cardinal Orsi undertook a new ecclesiastical history, and died at the twentieth volume in quarto, which does not finish the sixth century. Trust me, madam, read that also, or you will never be tranquil \*."

Diodorus, one of these characters, a professor of dialectics, died of shame at not being able to solve a question proposed by Stilpo†. For such aspirants, Catholicism, which is so opposed to pride and egotism in every form, and which communicates itself to all men by means of a common doctrine, teaching only truths of a spiritual and practical utility, can have no attraction; but wise men are not repulsed by these considerations; they are more likely to agree with Passavanti, in concluding it to be a clear sign that masters and preachers are adulterous lovers of vain-glory, when in teaching and preaching they leave useful things, and indulge in subtleties, novelties, and vain opinions, using figures and allegories, which go not to the heart; "there is an exquisite subtlety," says the Divine page, "and the same is unjust‡."

Wise men will instinctively turn to seek the simple, profound lessons that Catholicism yields, and desire to consort with its unpretending sages, who, they perceive, are men that, if they were not too sincerely humble, might address many who admire without imitating them, in words like those of the poet,

saying,-

"I am less proud to hear you tell my worth Than you much willing to be counted wise In spending your wit in the praise of mine."

The ancient compliment, "qui scis Romana simplicitate loqui,"

can be applied to those who represent the Catholic wisdom. The style proclaims the man, the simplicity reveals the pure ideas and the single heart. "Hail, queen wisdom!" cries St. Francis of Assisi, "Ave, regina sapientia, cum tua sorore sancta, pura simplicitate! Hail, lady poverty, with thy holy sister humility! Lady charity, too, with thy holy sister obedience. Holy wisdom confounds Satan and all his malice; holy, pure simplicity, confounds the wisdom of this world, and the wisdom of the body; holy poverty confounds all cupidity and temporal care; holy humility confounds pride, and all worldly men; holy charity confounds all diabolic and carnal temptations and fears; holy obedience confounds all corporal and carnal wills \*." These are salutations which will attract wise men, as expressing wisdom in its depths. The sage of the world even recognizes the fact appealed to by the seraph of Assisi, and says, with our old poet,—

"Hard things are compass'd oft by easy means; And judgment, being a gift deriv'd from heaven, Tho' sometimes lodg'd i'th' hearts of worldly men (That ne'er consider from whom they receive it) Forsakes such as abuse the giver of it. Which is the reason that the politick And cunning statesman, that believes he fathoms The counsels of all kingdoms on the earth, Is by simplicity oft overreach'd."

Those who are truly wise, prefer even the language of an humble St. Francis, all unarrayed and primitive as it is, to that of high, pretending sophists, regarding more their own fame than the interest of those to whom they address them-They find the simplicity of the one fraught with goodness, so that they might be said to prefer it partly for a reason similar to that which made Menedemus attach himself to Stilpo rather than to all the philosophers; though, when asked why he so greatly admired him, he only replied, "He is a good-natured man;" as, in fact, to use the very words of a renowned Catholic author, "without good nature, no knowledge is of any value." The false wisdom disdains the Catholic simplicity, not observing even the fact noticed by Suso, that the number of men who are devoted to the curious cultivation of their intellect is far greater than that of the simple. "I call men," he adds, "devoted to their intellect, those in whose estimation the intellect holds the first place, but simplicity, that which is not occupied with the multiplicity of things, but which renders a man like a boy. O truly happy is he who perseveres, stable without multiplicity

<sup>\*</sup> Spec. Vitæ S. Francisci, c. 109.

of cares\*." "This simplicity," says a French historian, "is not what you imagine; it is rather the end of wisdom, like the

second ignorance which comes after knowledge."

Catholicism requires what a wise man loves,—acquiescence in what is truly said, and meek obedience to truth. "Ne contendat contra veritatem ob tumorem animi," says the rule of St. Pachomius †. "Omnium superior efficitur homo qui obedierit veritati ‡." says the same patriarch of monks; and Catholicity, by producing humility, acts on some minds like the plant called mahaleb, which changes the quality of the land on which it is cultivated, when, without its influence, the soil would be eternally sterile 6.

The humility which attracts wise men to Catholicity, is not confined to the external manner and language which it inspires. It lies in the very core of the Catholic religion; for what can be more humble than all the means which that religion employs for effecting its purposes? What more humble than the sacraments which are only for the humble? Witness the confes-What humility is there! What more humble than the catechism taught by mothers? than the homily preached by the parish priest? Yet such are the natural channels of communicating the supernatural good; wise men, therefore, remark the analogy between Catholicism and nature, which, as Leibnitz says, "is like a good manager saving where it ought, in order to be liberal when time and place require; being magnificent in its effects, and economical, that is, humble, or what the proud would call mean, in the organization which it employs ||." The arrogant, of course, will find no issue here to arrive at Catholicity; for, on the whole, we may conclude as we began, saying with the poet,-

> "Of all the causes which conspire to blind Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind, What the weak head with strongest bias rules, Is pride, the never failing vice of fools."

But in regard to this particular result it may be justly added,

"If once right reason drives that cloud away, Truth breaks upon us with resistless day."

But now another avenue presents itself; and this is perhaps the

# Monita St. Pachomii.

<sup>\*</sup> De Veritate Dialog. c. 12.

<sup>+</sup> clix. ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg.

<sup>§</sup> Varenne-Fenille, Mém. sur l'Admin. Forestière, ii.

<sup>||</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l' Entendement Humain, lib. iii.

safest and the best of all: for wise men will admire the reverence in regard to religious truth which Catholicity inspires; they will observe how many precedents there are in every age to teach wicked men—

"That when they leave religion, and turn atheists, Their own abilities leave them \*."

They will recoil from men who say, with Menander, " $\acute{o}$   $\nu o \tilde{v}_{S} \gamma d \rho$   $\acute{\eta} \mu \tilde{\omega} \nu \acute{o}$   $\Theta \epsilon \acute{o}_{S}$ —Our god is reason." They are much nearer to the point of saying, "Our God is the God of the Catholic Church;" not the god of Theophilanthropists, of the "Decadi," but the God of Christians and of the Sunday. "Ah! for my part," exclaims a great orator, "I declare that I renounce this God of the sophists. this God of the eclectics, this God of reason, this God of philosophy, and that I am content with the good God, with the God of the human race, with the God of the people, with the God of the peasant, with the God of the pious soul, of the mother, of the child; with the God of the Gospel, the God of the Church, the God of the catechism, the God of faith. I hold to this living God, in whose name every spirit smiles, every heart vibrates, and all flesh thrills with joy. I hold to this one God, alone infinite, alone almighty, alone eternal, alone perfect; to whom every creature aspires as to its Master, its Creator, and its Father; the source of all consolation and of all felicity."

Why wisdom should be religious, can be matter of surprise to no one who considers that wisdom necessarily is concerned with life, and with whole views of things. For the very nature of the human existence proclaims the necessity of religion, since men are incessantly exposed to vicissitudes when religion alone can be of any avail. A man who does not place his own death in the list of events that are every instant possible, cannot have made, says the Count de Maistre, "any great progress in philosophy +." "There is, in fact," he observes in another letter alluding to the difference between a Protestant and a Catholic, "but one great question in the world; for a question which finishes at the death of the man is hardly worth the trouble of examination 1." Wise men, therefore, turn their thoughts to religion as constituting the supreme philosophy. This may sound paradoxical to many in these days; for Protestantism at an early period weakened the natural religious sense of philosophers. "It seems," says Leibnitz, writing to Clarke, "that natural religion is at an extremely low ebb in England." "It is true," replies Clarke, "and it is a deplorable thing that there are in England,

<sup>\*</sup> Massinger. 

† Lettres, &c., i. 21.

‡ Lettres, &c., i. 33.

as in other countries, persons who deny even natural religion, or who corrupt it; but this must be ascribed to the disorder introduced into morals, and to the false philosophy of the materialists." Wise men, for infinite reasons, will comprehend doctrinal or positive, as well as natural religion, in their reverence. "The common judgment of theologians," says Leibnitz, "ought not to be treated as a vulgar opinion. There must be great cause indeed to dare to contradict it; and for my part," he adds, "in this instance (he proved afterwards that in every other, his approval was equally bestowed), I see none whatever."

The essentially religious character of wisdom constitutes, therefore, an avenue to the Catholic Church, which has never separated theology from philosophy, as those who renounced subjection to her often expressly, and almost always virtually, have done; whose formal divorce between faith and reason was solemnly condemned in the last Council of Lateran, under Leo Wisdom, if you will hear wise men of all ages, leads necessarily to God, and even causes men to recognize, with Leibnitz, that they have "a more certain knowledge of God than of any thing else without them." Thus Plato exclaims, "O men, we say, according to the ancient tradition, ώσπερ καὶ ὁ παλαιὸς λόγος. God is the beginning, and end, and middle of all things; He moves straight on, at the same time embracing the world, -εὐθεῖαν περαίνει, κατὰ φύσιν, περιπορευόμενος\*." The sophist, in whose head, however crammed with plausible theories, some fibre is a little out of its place, turns from Catholicity for the same reason that draws the wise man towards it. The former requires all instruction to wear what he terms a secular character. Instead of reducing all arts to theology, which is the Christian scheme of education; he seeks to banish theology from all arts. Of the Catholic he complains, saying, "The vice of his mind is its theologic determination: nothing with him has the liberality of universal wisdom; but we are always with him in a church." It is, however, precisely this theological element, the most natural of all directions, admitted by the human mind, imparting such a decidedly religious character to its thoughts, which renders Catholicism so accessible and attractive to wise men, by the avenue now before us. these writers mean by the liberality of universal wisdom? What is philosophy, or what has it ever been, if left without external aid from revelation? St. Gregory says, that the blind man in the Gospel, who sat by the way-side, begging, represents the human race in its darkness, waiting for Truth, who says of himself. "Ego sum via." But mark the inconsistency of the objec-

<sup>&</sup>quot; De Legibus, lib. iv.

tion, coming, at least, from Protestants. Catholic wisdom, you complain, is sacerdotal, wound up with ecclesiastical science; it keeps men as it were always in a Church; but if this be an obstacle, then the whole scheme of revelation forms a barrier; for men have only to read the Acts of the Apostles to have grounds for conviction that, from the beginning, the profession of Christianity requires the Catholic conception of philosophy which supposes wisdom to be the result of Divine revelation and apostolic teaching, excluding all idea that, within a certain sphere, any individual or national dissent from what is pronounced by ecclesiastical authority, can be justified. It is no doubt, therefore, perfectly true that philosophy and theology are one in the judgment of Catholics. All through the early and middle ages, and down to the present day, within the Catholic communion, we find wisdom declared by the Church to be identical with religion, and theology to be deemed its highest form. "Si es theologus," says St. Diadochus, "vere orabis; et, si verè orabis, theologus verè eris \*." The charge of the infidel, and of the Protestant is, therefore, incurred by every consistent Catholic, who may say, with St. Gregory of Tours, "Illud tantum studens ut quod in Ecclesia credi prædicatur sine aliquo fuco aut cordis hæsitatione retineam †." But, in such admissions, wise men will find no obstacle; for philosophy, in any true sense of the word, has nothing to apprehend from such traditions.

"Dreier, of Koenigsberg," says Leibnitz, "has well remarked, that the true metaphysics which Aristotle sought for, and which he called την ζητουμένην, were theology ‡." Why should this astonish? See what becomes of secularized metaphysics. person who tries to imagine what the science of medicine could have been while it took no account of the fact of the circulation of the blood, on which, as a basis, all certain reasoning about the phenomena of life must rest, may be prepared for what some philosophers' books exhibit of the writhings of human reason in attempts to explain and to form theories of society and of morals, while the fatal error of excluding the Catholic truth is mixed with every supposition. "All the gifts of God are good," says St. Diadochus; "but nothing so much inflames our heart, and excites it to love his goodness, as the gift of theology §." "To know creatures in the Word," says St. Bonaventura, "is called matutinal vision; and to know them in themselves, is vespertine||." "The wisdom of God," as he says elsewhere, "is the true tree of life, which, in the hearts of the saints, as if in Paradise, is at first sown invisibly by fear, then watered by

<sup>\*</sup> De Perfect. Spirit. c. 58.

<sup>\*</sup> Hist. lib. 1. ‡ Théodicée, P. ii. § St. Diad. de Perfect. Spirit. 67. || Compend. Theol. Verit.

grace, which takes root by faith, grows by devotion, springs up by compunction, increases by desire, gains strength by charity, flourishes by hope, flowers by circumspection, spreads its branches by discipline, fructifies by virtue, ripens by patience, is gathered by death, and enjoyed by contemplation \*." Friar Antonius Monilianus, the Ligurian, wrote a book, entitled, "Sursum Corda†," expressing thus, by the name, the object of Catholicism, which is the same as that of all ancient and true philosophy.

——"Th' eternal wisdom doth not covet Of man his strength or reason, but his love; 'And not in vain; since love, of all the powers, Is that which governs every thought of ours."

Catholicism has been taunted much of late with the benefits of mixed education. Well, it has its own system, which may bear this title; for Catholicism invites us to one school of men and angels mixed, to one school of heaven and earth, "unam cœli ac terræ scholam," as Salvian says I. The sum of knowledge taught in this great school is love, which excludes no illumination of the intelligence, and no legitimate use of any thing that nature has ordained. Religious and social ends are essentially embraced by this wisdom. "In rational things," says Peter of Blois, "God ordains memory, science, and love; that love may grow up and strengthen from memory and science, and that these two may be sweetened by love; and thus is formed in men affection towards God, and amongst themselves,—a certain bland and social communion of wills §." "One thing," says Passavanti, "is love from the heart; another, love from the soul." "The former," as St. Chrysostom remarks, "is, in some respects, according to the impression of the flesh, by which God may be loved, if we carefully avoid worldly and carnal things. This love is felt in the heart. The love of the soul is not felt, but understood; for this love resides in the judgment. He who believes that in God is all good, and that out of Him is no good, loves God with all his soul. To love God with all our mind, is to turn towards God all our thoughts from within and from without. So he whose intelligence rises to God, whose thoughts are fixed on the things of God, and whose memory recals the things of God, loves God with all his mind | ." "Because I have believed," savs the blessed Hildephonso, "I will speak: because I love, I will announce, insinuating nothing through contention and vainglory, laying down nothing in contradiction to holy truth, in-

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin. Æternit. † Buccius, Lib. Conform., &c. 99.
† De Gubernat. Dei, lib. i. 9. § Pet. Bles. de Amicit. Christ. xi.

tending nothing which can subvert, but only what should disclose truth.—Nihil profanum in confessione habens, nihil alienum à pietate (quæ Dei est) tenens; nihil quod unam et Sacram fidem impugnet in omni præcordiorum abdito gerens; nihil prorsus quod divinis rebus obviet : nihil quod sanctis sacramentis obsistat, nihil quod sacris mysteriis adversetur. Therefore, let no prelate despise me, no equal derogate from me, no subject insult me; let no one reproach me in the house, depreciate me in the forum, no religious man whisper, no popular class murmur; let not the aged man deny the youth, nor the youth spurn his fellow; let not the learned man revile, or the ignorant reject, or the powerful repel." Then, unfolding the reasons for that fear which is pronounced to be "the beginning of wisdom," he proceeds thus: "He will come-nor is He far distant: He will come soon; but when He comes in majesty, when the great tempest shall be in His circuit, then blessed are all they who truly love Him; blessed they who speak truth concerning Him; blessed they who despise not truth; blessed they who do justice in truth; blessed they who trust in Him. For the judge cometh, the strict judge cometh. He will be present, visible before us. Therefore, let all attend; let all consider with all their mind, and all their strength, and all their heart, and resolve with me to seek for nothing but truth, to love nothing but truth, to vindicate nothing but truth, that is, God, and the things that are God's.—Solis adversariis Dei resistens. solis prophanatoribus et prophanationibus cunctis obvius existens, solis contradicentibus veritati, amore veritatis adversans \*."

Wise men will be attracted by such religious voices pointing out the roads by which, as Don John de Palafox says, "man goes to the Palace of the science of salvation †," feeling necessarily the superior importance of studying the supreme good of this life's journey; for, as St. Bruno says, "Stulta est omnis sapientia, quæ alio tendit et aliam viam ostendit quam illam quæ ducit ad regna cœlorum ‡." The wise, therefore, will not protest against the religious character of wisdom imparted to it by Catholicity; they will not oppose what is instituted on the grounds of its having been divinely instituted; for they know that best are all things as the will of God ordained them. It is these thoughts which Alanus de Insulis expresses, in the invocation—

<sup>&</sup>quot;Summe parens, æterne Deus, vivensque potestas, Unica forma boni, recti via limes honesti,

<sup>\*</sup> Confessio et Oratio B. Hildephonsi. † Voyage Spirituel. ‡ S. Brun., Exposit. de Confessoribus.

Fons vitæ, sol justitiæ, pietatis asylum, Principium, finisque modus, mensura, sigillum, Rerum causa, manens ratio, noys alma, sophia Vera, dies verus, lux nescia noctis, origo Summa, decor mundi perfectus, vita perennis \*."

"They will regard all things," as St. Bonaventura prescribes, "with a view to the praise of the Creator. When they see prelates, amd men of high dignity, they will consider that these are constituted to show the magnificence and power of God. When they see men apply to science, investigating the most occult secrets of creatures, and narrowly observing the most minute things, they will recognize in them an image of the wisdom of God. When they see others engaged in temporal affairs, they will praise in them the Divine providence, providing by such means for those who rest; and so with others, of different conditions †."

But having observed, that the religious character, in general, of the Catholic wisdom, will form no obstacle to wise men, in their advance towards that Church which imparts it, let us proceed to remark, that neither will its dogmatic element impede their steps; and now mark attentively this fresh signal, standing here by the way. "Absque Christo," says St. Bonaventura, "nec sapiens quis esse potest, nec intelligens, nec consiliarius, nec fortis, nec eruditus ‡." The Church has possession of that key which is the—

"Dread opener of the mysterious doors Leading to universal knowledge,"

"O glorious key! O happy key!" exclaims Antonio de Guevara. "Thou belongest to all mysteries,—sapientiam præstans parvulis: thou didst open heaven and shut up hell; open unto sinners, and shut from angels, fallen through pride; open to the Church, and shut from the synagogue; open to the sacraments, and shut to the sacrifices; open to the spirit, and shut to the letter; open unto grace, and shut to sin. The key of vice, vicious men keep; the key of the world, worldlings have; but the key of heaven, none hath but those who receive it from Christ." Without the dogmatical teaching of his Church no intelligence is contented—

"But anxious thoughts in endless circles roll, Without a centre where to fix the soul. In this wild maze their vain endeavours end; How can the less the greater comprehend?"

<sup>\*</sup> Alani Encyclopæd., lib. v. c. 5.

<sup>+</sup> Stim. Div. Amoris, p. iii. c. 8.

Amidst the abundant banquets of science, each guest is hungerstricken, like Erisichthon:

> "Inque epulis epulas quærit; quodque urbibus esse Quodque satis poterat populo, non sufficit uni \*."

The multiplication of knowledge does not remedy the interior evil. Knowledge, no doubt, is good;

"But knowledge is as food, and needs no less Her temperance over appetite, to know In measure what the mind may well contain. Oppressed else with surfeit, and soon turns Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind."

The mind, like the forest soil, must not be overplanted. Varenne-Fenille says, "that an acre should contain only thirtysix trees, if they are to attain to ten or twelve feet in circumference. Whoever will examine the vacant space which is generally round a tree of this size, will not be surprised at the conclusion. In overloading the ground you may have more trees, but you will have less timber †." Trees will not flourish if they are deprived of the sun. Nor will minds prosper, however full, on which the Church does not freely shine. Multiply studies as you may, with a view of appeasing the appetite of the mind, still without the revealed light, which can be communicated only by virtue of Catholicism, since nothing else can give security even as to the truth of Scripture, no one can be truly wise, though the glimmerings of natural truth may seem to satisfy men for a moment, while declaiming on the inferior knowledge of some more familiar with the catechism than with the hand-book of science; but at these taunts the wise will not be greatly moved; for, after all, supposing that the ignorance which is ridiculed, exists, as St. Augustin asks, addressing God, "Quid tantum oberat parvulis tuis longe tardius ingenium, cum a te longe non recederent, ut in nido ecclesiæ tuæ tuti plumescerent, et alas charitatis alimento sanæ fidei nutrirent 1." "Igorance of the world," says St. Isidore, "is no injury to those knowing God; but yet he knows perfectly who knows first God, and then those things, not for himself, but for God. It is no injury to a man, through simplicity, if he thinks unworthily respecting the elements, provided he can pronounce truth respecting God; for though he may be unable to dispute on incorporeal and corporeal natures, yet a just life with faith makes him blessed \( \)."

<sup>\*</sup> viii. † Confess. iv. 16.

<sup>+</sup> Mém. sur l'Administ. Forestière.

<sup>§</sup> De Sum. Bono, lib. ii. c. 1.

"What, though he is not wealthy in the dower
Of spanning wisdom; though he does not know
The shiftings of the mighty winds that blow
Hither and thither all the changing thoughts
Of man: though no great ministering reason sorts
Out the dark mysteries of human souls
To clear conceiving; yet there ever rolls
A vast idea before him, and he gleans
Therefrom his liberty."

But it is not alone with religion in general that wisdom is allied. It disposes men to positive theology, to embrace doc-

trines as propounded by the Catholic Church.

Wisdom, in regard to what is divine and essential, desires a knowledge, not of the fewest, but of the most truths accessible to man. It discerns, with the Count de Maistre, "that a Catholic who passes into a sect apostatizes really, because he denies to-day what he believed yesterday: while a sectarian, who passes into the Church, abdicates no doctrine, denies nothing that he has before believed; but, on the contrary, believes what he denied, which is a very different thing. In all sciences, it is honourable to learn truths of which one was ignorant. By what singularity, it asks, can the science of religion, that which alone is absolutely necessary, form an exception \*?"

Wise men, too, find a congenial element in Catholicity which refuses to admit the modern distinction attempted to be drawn between doctrines that are fundamental and those that are not so; for the Catholic Church, which loves only clear ideas, has always answered, that she knew perfectly what was meant by a true or a false doctrine, but that she could not comprehend what was an important or an unimportant doctrine among true doctrines, that is, those that have been revealed t." And, accordingly, men of wisdom discern that facts themselves proclaim that she is right; for how little, in the first step, seems the difference between some sects and Catholicity! and yet how immense is the contrast in point of moral consequences! "A poison," says the Count de Maistre, "is only judged of by its effects. The bladder which contains the venom of the viper is very small, and the canal through which it is injected into the wound through the teeth is hardly perceptible in a microscope." Our forest contains the same symbol in the nettle, which is similarly armed. Now the moral is as full as the physical world of these imperceptible passages, through which evil passes into the domain of God, which is that of order; and schism is one of these passages. "Pride may exclaim, There is no harm, all is well; but to those who view things without

<sup>\*</sup> Letters, ii. 278.

passion, the fatal consequences are visible from the first \*." The wise man, therefore, concludes, by crying out, with this illustrious guide, saying to each doubter, "Submit yourself perfeetly to truth. Hold for true all that is true; for false, all that is false. Desire with all your heart that the empire of truth may be extended from day to day. When you will be so disposed, I will say to you, like Lusignan, 'Allez, le ciel fera le reste.'" Wise men, like the Magi, are not content with natural investigations: they desire firmer ground than can be furnished by human reason, creating that movable ground called philosophy, "on which never human foot," as the Count de Maistre says, "has been able to steady itself." They seek a rock to stand on; they follow a star, or a Divine guidance; they embrace faith; they hold to doctrines divinely revealed and authoritatively promulgated. Amidst the fluctuating opinions of men, and the confusion consequent upon periodical attempts to resettle the basis of all things, including even that of religion, many will be directed to seek truth, therefore, in the Catholic Church, where there are neither innovations to dread, nor solutions to wait for,-" where," as the Count de Maistre says, "all history is dogmatical and every dogma historical; where there is nothing vague; where all is fixed, established, circumscribed, invariable, placed in evident relation with human nature and the history of the universet;" where, to the sophist evincing ignorance in knowledge, while trying to shake the common principles of morality, there is ever a monitor supplied like the friar to Giovanni, in the old play, who says-

"Dispute no more in this; for know, young man, These are no school-points; nice philosophy May tolerate unlikely arguments. But heaven admits no jest; wits that presum'd On wit too much—with foolish grounds of art, Discover'd first the nearest way to hell, And fill'd the world with dev'lish atheism. Such questions, youth, are fond."

It is the remark of a great political writer, "that it is the nature of parties to retain their original enmities far more firmly than their original principles." The observation may be extended to all sects. Their animosity may not abate, but their opinions change. Without the Catholic Church, there are no longer, properly speaking, any doctrines. As a distinguished author says, "those separated from her, move and cry out, but they do not teach. They have destroyed every thing, lost every thing, even error itself. Whoever, within the sphere of religion, wishes to have a principle, an idea, is constrained to

<sup>\*</sup> ii. 291.

> —— "Velut silvis, ubi passim Palantes error certo de tramite pellit, Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit; unus utrique Error, sed variis illudit partibus +."

Lost on the ocean of uncertainty, the philosophers seem ever looking for some stable isle, raised up like Delos amidst the waters, to enable them to obtain deliverance of their laborious conceptions. And yet where firm land is pointed out, they steer from it; with pains they cultivate the sophistic doubt, of which ancient philosophers used to cite as an instance the notions respecting the often-patched vessel of Theseus, as some held it was the same, and others that it was wholly another, and not that which once carried him. But the mental disease which they distinguished by this title, is far more truly incurred by those who pretend to doubt the identity of the present Catholic Church with that vessel which bore to the port of heaven the primitive generations. Yet these are they who promise things magnificent to those who consent to follow them:—

" Qui sibi semitam non sapiunt, alteri monstrant viam."

We might add, from considering that they are obliged to borrow from Catholicity even in attacking it,—

" Quibus divitias pollicentur, ab iis drachmam ipsi petunt."

Wise men will remark, that without the pale of Catholicism nothing is found even in what is held truth or virtue that is not subject to mutability. Religion itself changes with the rest. So a poet of the Elizabethan age exclaims:

"Sacred Religion! mother of Form and Fear?
How gorgeously sometimes dost thou sit decked!
What pompous vestures do we make thee wear!
What stately piles we prodigal erect!
How sweet perfumed thou art! how shining clear!
How solemnly observed! with what respect!
Another time, all plain, all quite thread-bare,
Thou must have all within, and naught without;
Sit poorly, without light, disrobed; no care
Of outward grace, to amuse the poor devout;
Powerless, unfollowed; scarcely men can spare
The necessary rites to set thee out."

<sup>\*</sup> De Legibus, lib. ix.

We observed on a former road, that the end of some changes in religion is to accept practically the conclusion, that the same theory can be true and false. But wisdom cannot sanction what destroys even the great foundation of mathematics, which, as Leibnitz observes, is the principle of contradiction or identity, that is to say, that an enunciation cannot be true and false at the same time, and that A is A and can never be not A.

The wise desire what Catholicism only yields-a faith that changes not, a form as immutable. "The first thing," says St. Isidore, "is to know what we seek. The second is to lay hold of it. For it is imperfect wisdom to know whither you tend, and not to know the way by which you ought to go; for of what advantage, in time of famine, to see a fruitful region and not to know the road that leads to it? Lo, each one seeks his country, but he has lost his way; and wandering, he travels on without advancing to it, and the more he walks the farther he finds himself from what he seeks. He who deserts the royal way, which is Christ, though he may see truth it will be only from afar, because no one excepting by that road can approach to it \*." "Vias tuas, domine, demonstra mihi, et semitas tuas edoce me. This," adds the Abbot Rupertus, "is the voice of the old man, bound with the chains of original sin, and not knowing how to return to his celestial country, and not having power. Therefore, on the first Sunday of Advent, the Church takes care to show what way man must take to return, namely, by obedience, meekness, humility, and charity †." These, will wise men say, are the doctrines which it imports us all to know. "If thou, O Lord, wilt convert me," says Savonarola, "docebo iniquos vias tuas-not the ways of Plato or Aristotle, not the involutions of syllogisms, not the dogmas of philosophy, not the inflated words of rhetoricians, not secular affairs, not the ways of vanity nor the ways leading to death, but Thy ways and Thy precepts which lead to life; not one way only, but many ways, for Thy precepts are many: yet all these ways terminate in one; all end in one charity, which joins all the faithful in one heart and in one soul in the Lord: for there are as many ways as there are different states of men, leading to the celestial country, and I will teach these ways to each man according to his condition t."

We read in the Gospel, how our Lord, being fatigued on the way, sat at a well speaking with the woman of Samaria, who came there to draw water. "Known and celebrated," says Rupertus, "is the mystery of this lesson to the faith of the holy

<sup>\*</sup> De Sum. Bono, lib. i. c. 22.

<sup>+</sup> De Divinis Officiis, lib. iii. c. 3.

<sup>‡</sup> Savonar. Med. in Ps. Miserere.

Church. It is known to her that our Lord Jesus Christ, from the journey which He made for our salvation, being fatigued unto death, and the death of the cross, sat upon the well, that is, overcame the depth of worldly wisdom; and that the Samaritan woman, that is, the Church—who is a stranger, that was accustomed to draw from the deep obscure doctrines of the philosophers dead water, from which the thirsty soul could never be satiated, that it might never again thirst—was taught that he who should drink from the water that Christ would give—that is, from the Holy Spirit—would never more thirst, but that there would be in it a fountain of living water to life eternal \*."

The wise confide in the light of faith. "In lumine tuo," they say, "videbimus lumen to." They find nothing to contradict when they read the simple exposition of the Catholic doctrines. Show them that of Bossuet, or that presented by Pope Alexander to the sultan of Iconium, and they are satisfied. The pontiff in that document expatiates on no vague barren field of philosophic speculation; he merely lays down what is found in every Catechism, and concludes, saying, "Such are the bases of the Christian faith, on which rises a venerable monument that attains heaven; such is the ladder of the Catholic religion, by means of which it is permitted to man to mount to the abode of eternal light." In fact, the wise find no article of the Catechism that is not conformable to the profoundest conceptions that they can form of truths in regard to human duties. So the Count de Maistre, writing to an archbishop, requests him to place his person, and his writings, his zeal, and all that he possesses, at the feet of the Pope, of whom he is the philosophic, political, and theological subject, in this sense that he believes both reason, and politics, and religion, are all equally interested in the full and free exercise of his sublime functions t." Such is the conclusion of wise men with regard to every Catholic doctrine. They feel that it is philosophically and politically, as well as theologically, true: they are content, therefore, with the Catechism.

"Let us not seek farther philosophic light," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "for the darkness of human wisdom only clouds over the bright star of our faith; and we have often seen proof that he who desires to be a philosopher ceases to be a Christian §." "Qui fidem defendere novit," says Robert d'Arbriselle, "titubantibus est necessarius non credentibus: in defensione enim fidei curantur vulnera dubitationis vel infidelitatis. He who defends is a physician; and they who are in health need

<sup>\*</sup> De Div. Officiis, lib. iv. c. 16.

<sup>#</sup> Lettres, i. 73.

<sup>†</sup> Ps. xxxv. § In Epiph. Dom.

not apply to him \*." " Testimonia tua credibilia facta sunt nimis. They are too credible," continues St. Thomas of Villanova, "too visible and certain. For who can refrain from believing? I hesitate not to declare, brethren, and I say it with excessive joy of heart, though I may seem to you to speak rashly, yet I will say, that faith, to those who are versed in the scrutiny of the Divine testimonies, can hardly be said to be faith, for from faith it has already passed into light; so clearly and certainly do they see in general that the Catholic faith is true, though God wills that they may not be able to see evidence for each of its parts, lest the merit of faith should be lost, since in this life it is more useful for us to believe than to understand †." "O fides catholica," he exclaims elsewhere, "quam stabilis, quam firma es, quam bene radicata, quam bene fundata super firmam petram !!" "There is a communion of light and of faith in the Church," says a great author, "as there is a communion of strength in an army. As the soldier in battle is brave and strong, not only by his own valour and force, but also by the force and courage of the whole army of which he is a part, so the Catholic believes, not only by the grace of the faith which he has individually received, but also by the grace of the faith infused into all Catholic hearts. He believes with the faith of the whole Church; so that the faith of sixty centuries, the faith of millions of men, the faith of the whole Church from its rise in Adam down to the present moment, unites itself with his spirit, enlarges it, adds to the force of a part the strength of the whole, and places man on the basis of a perfect certainty; while other men can only say, I opine, I think, it seems to me, the Catholic alone says and can say, credo." Now wisdom is attracted by this certainty which characterizes the Catholic religion. "For the eternal motto of the Church," as the Count de Maistre remarks, " is the sentence of the prophet-I have believed, therefore have I spoken. Sure of herself, she has never been seen to waver: and on this point we may remark, that in separated communions it is precisely the noblest hearts that experience doubt and disquietude, whereas among Catholics faith is always in direct proportion with morality." The wise are attracted by that definition of a Catholic, which describes him as immovable in subjection to the Divine authority of the Church; for it is they who feel most forcibly the insufficiency of reason: therefore they will be the last to apply that sacred name of Catholic to any one who follows either his own private judgment, however remotely and disguised, or the religious opinions of his country, established by human laws

<sup>\*</sup> Opus Quadripartitum. † In Fest. S. Trin. c. ii. ± In Octav. Pasch.

contrary to authoritative teaching. They will repeat the words of Vincent of Lerins:- "He is a true and legitimate Catholic who loves the truth of God, the Church, and the body of Christ; who prefers nothing to Divine religion and to the Catholic faith, -neither the authority, nor love, nor genius, nor eloquence, nor philosophy of any man; but who, despising all these things, and remaining fixed and stable in faith, resolves to hold and believe only whatever he knows that the Catholic Church has universally in former ages held; who feels assured that whatever thing new and unheard of is introduced by any one, contrary to all the Saints, belongs not to religion but to temptation \*." A longing for the security of faith draws wise men to that Church which they can perceive to be impregnable. There they resolve to realize in themselves the experience to which St. Thomas of Villanova appeals, when he says, "the soul ought to be like a strong castle; and you know," he adds, " how that ought to be constructed; how it should be built on a high rock, with a strong wall, and another wall round it, with a deep ditch; how it should be approached by a drawbridge, through an iron door, having a stern porter, who respects no one, but diligently guards the gate. So should the soul be ever on high, firmly fixed on the rock of faith, and walled and trenched round with charity, and patience, and humility, having a heart as its entrance that can be raised, with a firm will like iron to refuse consent, and the fear of God as porter, who keeps ward d."

What wise men seek, again, is a concentration of mind on an object worthy of it: σεαυτόν μη τάρασσε, ἄπλωσσον σεαυτόν, says the Emperor Marcus Antoninus. "A river," says St. Anthony of Padua, " which parts into many branches, is soon dried up in its channel. A mind turned over many things is torn and weakened by cares t." The very word 'thought,' in the Latin language, signifies the necessity of an analogous disposition; for the expression in the Georgics 'amputare,' to think, means, to lop off, to prune, to throw aside all ideas, and leave the one on which you are to fix attention. Human philosophy even teaches the same lesson; for the aspect of external nature, as it presents itself to thoughtful contemplation, according to what philosophers admit, is that of unity in diversity, and of connexion among created things most dissimilar in their form, one fair harmonious whole §." Now, beyond all doubt, Protestantism is not favourable to the attainment of this advantage; nor is rationalism more conducive to it. "Why is it," asks Goethe, "that we moderns have so little concentration of mind?" It is

<sup>\* 25.</sup> 

<sup>‡</sup> Interp. Myst. in Lib. Eccles. 2.

<sup>†</sup> De Assumpt. Virg. iv. § Humboldt, Cosmos.

strange if such a philosopher should have had any difficulty in answering the question. Whereas, in Catholicism, men are enabled to attain to this direction and arrangement of ideas, which, in regard to faith, as sun rays concentrated in one point inflame. O what a varied and harmonized tune does faith strike from all the beautiful! Every joy and pain is fashioned by it to one end; this light blends with all ardours; it is as poets say, the mountain-top, the hoary cavern, the sage's pen, the poet's harp, the voice of friends. Feel we these things? That moment have we stept, to use their words, into a sort of oneness; and they who can realize it become, in respect to this high privilege, like Calderon and the great authors of the middle ages, "all whose thoughts were centred in Catholicism, that word comprising for them, faith, country, philosophy, art, and poetry \*," while the effect of the spirit which it signifies, can be traced throughout the whole course of their writings, "coming up every now and then, like some lurking theme which runs through a complicated piece of music, and links it all in a pervading chain of melody."

Alanus de Insulis, speaking of theology joined with faith,

says accordingly,-

"Quam via nulla latet, nullus locus abditus illi, Non delirus obest limes, non semita fallit. Lætatur: sed cuncta stupet quæ nuncius offert In speculo visus, ubi nil mortale, caducum, Deficiens, terrestre micat; solumque refulget Æternum, cœleste, manens, immobile, certum. Hic videt ingenitas species, speculatur ideas Coelestes, hominum formas, primordia rerum, Causarum causas, rationum semina, leges Parcarum, fati seriem, mentemque Tonantis: Cur alios humilis paupertas urget, egenos Comprimit, et solis lacrymis satiatur egestas. Cur aliis prædives opum pluit alveus omnis Divitias, divesque natat fœcundus in auro. Cur istos ditat sapientia, nubilat illos Sensus inops, animus pauper, mendica voluntas †."

Philosophy of old was deeply impressed with the importance of keeping one object steadily in view. Seeing a boy throwing stones at a gibbet, "Courage," said Diogenes to him, "you will attain an end." Aristotle says that "nature always acts with a view to some end, and that this end is always good." Wise men remark, that in this respect Catholicism resembles nature. The

+ Encyclopæd. lib. vi. c. 4.

<sup>\*</sup> Philalethe, Chasles Études sur l'Éspagne.

Church presents us with men embracing all studies, and following all paths of life; but generally, as St. Augustin says, "tantum explorantes temporalem naturam, quantum sufficit, ut per ea quæ facta sunt intellecta conspiciatur æternitas \*." As the historian of Montserrat says, "The exact knowledge of all that has happened in the world since its creation, a geographical acquaintance with all places, a familiarity with the history of the greatest men, in short, the recital of all the wonders of nature, and all the miracles of grace, all that will profit nothing, unless it be referred to our last end,-porro unum est necessarium +." Now Catholicism teaches and enables men to refer thus all things to one supreme object, and thereby wins wise men to herself. Here is added another incidental issue to a recognition of the truth of the Catholic religion; for a sign that any proposition is true, is when it agrees with other true propositions; for truth agrees with itself, but falsehood is discordant with itself; now, as Savonarola observes, "Catholicism agrees with all truth 1," and no one can mislead, then, him who is faithful to it; for who can deceive his mind whose eye views all things at one

Wise men are not arrested in their course towards the Catholic Church by meeting those moral and physical evils with which we were so long confronted in the district of the forest that we traversed last. They remark that a series of numbers can be proposed which seem all irregular, where the numbers increase and diminish variably without the appearance of any order, while, nevertheless, he who should know the key of the figures, and who should hear the origin and construction of this series, could give a rule which would show that the series is strictly regular, and that it has beautiful properties. Similarly, they remark that a line can have turns and returns, ascents and descents, points of return, and points of inflexion, interruptions, and other variations, so that one can see in it neither rhyme nor reason, especially in considering only a part of the line; and yet it may be possible to give its equation and construction, in which a geometrician would find the reason and propriety of all these pretended irregularities. It is in this way, according to the prescription of Christian philosophers, that they judge of sins and sufferings, monsters, and other pretended defects in the universe. So Leibnitz extols the saying of St. Bernard, " ordinatissimum est minus interdum ordinate fieri aliquid \"." Order, on the whole, requires some little disorder in part, and

<sup>·</sup> Confess, xiii, 22,

<sup>†</sup> Dom Louis Montegut, Hist. de Mt. S., Réflexions derniers.

<sup>#</sup> De Veritate Fidei Christianæ.

<sup>§</sup> Ep. 276, ad Eugen. III.

even this little disorder is only apparent in the whole, and not even apparent in relation to the felicity of those who place themselves in the way of order; it is like music when in a rapture "the master plays so swiftly upon his instrument so many voluntaries, and so quick, that there is curiosity and cunning, concord in discord, lines of differing method meeting in one full centre of delight." Faith, on the whole, involves the character of that true wisdom described by Alanus in the lines,

"Illa monet juvenem monitu seniore, senisque Largitur mores juveni, docet ergo, repente Ne quid agat, subitumve nihil præsumat at omne Factum præveniat animo, deliberet ante Quam faciat, primumque suos examinet actus; Dividat a falso verum, secernat honestum A turpi, vitium fugiens sectator honesti; Si quid promittit, promissum munus adæquet, Vel superet, ne re major spes gaudia vincat. Non fluat in motus varios, sed firmiter uni Insistat mens fixa bono, ne singula tentans Nil teneat, nec sic animus discurrat ubique Quod nusquam; . . . ne mens sic omnibus adsit Ut nulli; sic cuncta probet ut singula perdat \*."

But, further, in the very mysteries which are included in the idea of faith wise men find an issue to behold the Divine truth of the Catholic religion, which presents them for their acceptance. The forest school prepares them for profiting by this avenue; for in the woods they find many things that are inaccessible to human reason. Some men of science, it is true, attempt to deny some of these mysteries, as, for instance, the influence of the moon on the quality of wood, according as it is felled in the waxing or the waning of that luminary, though all architects, and builders, and veteran woodmen, believe positively in this influence, while even the scientific observer of nature himself, like Delamarre, who has written a long treatise on one kind of tree alone, arrives at a conviction of its reality, finding that it is as perceptible on trees as on the tides of the ocean +. But whatever division of opinions may be on this point, every one conversant with vegetable life will admit the justice of our general proposition. In the moral forest, therefore, men are prepared to find analogous phenomena.

"—— Mortality
Creeps on the dung of earth, and cannot reach
The riddles which are purposed from on high."

<sup>\*</sup> Id. lib. vii. 5.

<sup>+</sup> Traité pratique de la Culture des Pins, 231.

What is the human mind without religion? What is religion without mysteries? No one need wait long for an answer to these questions in this age of the world, when, as a deep observer says, in consequence of rejecting both, "all is true except truth, all is virtuous except virtue, all is honourable except honour." The answer is read in the calamities of Europe, now that spiritual and moral doctrines have lost all their importance, now that doubt has become philosophy, as egotism has become justice, interest law, anarchy government,

and atheism religion \*. Wise men, therefore, are not satisfied with the result of what is called the philosophic, in opposition to the Catholic reason. Indeed, the most superficial glance at what passes daily before our eyes is sufficient to lead to the same conclusion. rejection of mysteries, the absence of the sacramental sense, can be observed to effect perniciously the whole of a man's nature, the repulsive consequences extending to his manners, to his countenance, and to his tone of voice. That man, for instance, so thoroughly modern, who breathes only the spirit of the newspapers, however confident in himself when holding his Times journal in his hand, is not a companion whom the wise or simple, whether old or young, male or female, would covet for a journey of two hours, much less for the journey of life. Some philosophers who turn from Catholicity, and who yet feel the want of something higher and deeper than the thoughts indicated by this most repulsive type, have recourse to vain regrets at what they consider the progress of society. Goethe thus observes, that "the undetermined, widely expanding feelings of youth, and of uncultivated nations, are alone adapted to the sublime. All men," he continues, "more or less, feel such a disposition of the soul, and seek to satisfy this noble necessity in various ways. But as the sublime is easily produced by twilight and night, when objects are blended, it is, on the other hand, scared away by the day, which separates and sunders every thing; and so must it also be destroyed by every increase of cultivation, if it be not fortunate enough to take refuge with the beautiful, and unite itself closely with it, by which both become equally undying and indestructible."

Protestantism, exercising its privilege of choice in respect to what is supernatural, presents men with isolated articles for their acceptance, and expects them to rush from absolute incredulity into a belief of mysteries for the admission of which they are not previously prepared, thus betraying its own contradiction to the order of creation; for, as Leibnitz says, "nature

<sup>\*</sup> Ventura, Conférences sur la Raison Philosophique et la Raison Catholique, i.

never jumps; nothing is done all of a sudden." Now, in Catholicism, in this sense too, this law of continuity can be observed. It passes from little to great, and introduces nothing abruptly; as if recognizing in the moral a law of the physical world, in which a body cannot receive, in a moment, a movement contrary to a preceding movement \*. On the other hand, there is in the human mind a certain affinity with a system that involves mysteries; and, therefore, when faith has been withdrawn, we find, as the Count de Maistre observes, "that men are willing to create them for themselves, either flying to a totally different order, as that of animal magnetism, to which some will perhaps ascribe the powers said to be possessed by that Carthaginian named Albigerius, of whom St. Augustin speaks; or pretending to discover in religion itself secrets which it disowns. "There is now in Europe," says the Count de Maistre, "a multitude of men who imagine that Christianity conceals certain ineffable mysteries, without being inaccessible to man, and these constitute what the Germans call transcendental Christianity. These men have many ideas in common with Catholics. They read St. Theresa, St. Francis de Sales, and Fenelon." Now, it is impossible to become penetrated with such writings, and not approach to us in a notable manner; and I heard lately a great enemy of the Catholic religion say, "what vexes me is, that all this illuminism will finish by Catholicism †."

In fact, the mystic and wholesome food which is sought by the human intelligence, is found only in Catholicism, which presents a whole whose every part runs into mystery; guarded

awfully, like

"The strait pass where Hercules ordain'd The bound'ries, not to be o'erstepp'd by man ‡."

The daily object which Catholicism presents for our acceptance is an instance; for God wills that every man should live, as Passavanti says, "amorous of the celestial glory;" and that he should languish for it, consume himself, and even die for this love; not that he should approach and regard it fixedly, but that he should contemplate it from a distance, knowing that he who shall thus contemplate it during this life, will possess it abundantly and eternally in the next life. Catholicism nourishes the wise observance of limits to the range of thought when presented with Divine truth. When asked respecting mysteries, brother Giles replied, "The brink of the sea suffices for washing hands and feet §."

§ Spec. Vitæ S. Franc.

<sup>\*</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain, lib.i. † Lettres, i. 84. ‡ Hell. 26.

Catholicism leads man to exercise his reason, while placing it under the safeguard of that mystic sense, which teaches him where its employment would be irrational. Trithemius thus replies at length to the eight questions addressed to him in the Castle of Boppard by the Emperor Maximilian, respecting the mysteries of Providence and election\*. So argued the angel of the school, and all the sapient throng that taught within the Church, each saying in Dantæm words,—

"What reason here discovers, I have power
To show thee: that which lies beyond expect
From Beatrice; faith not reason's task †."

That every thing in the Church should exemplify the necessity of those limits which reason seeks for itself, even to satisfy its own consciousness of right, is an observation which will attract rather than repel the wise. "Let us beware," says Plato, " of imitating those, who after looking fixedly at the sun are in darkness at noon-day." The mysteries of Catholicism are proofs of its divinity. "A God whom man could comprehend," says a great author, "would be only a God whom man could have invented. A God entirely comprehensible by reason, might easily be the work of reason. By dint of being too reasonable, it would be a God contrary to reason." The same remark is just in application to the religious truths which are taught: and wise men therefore will acquiesce in the invitation addressed to them by the Church, saying, with Pope Innocent III., of its great mystery, "desinamus scrutari scrutinium," since an investigator of majesty will be oppressed by the glory: " nam accedit homo ad cor altum et exaltabitur Deus." They will admit that as the union with which God was made man is ineffable, so that conversion with which bread is made flesh passes wholly within the order of Divine truths beyond our scanning. Sophists will propose their subtle objections and questions relative to the Eucharist; but wise men will hear with an assenting mind the same great pontiff proceeding thus :- " Sane fecit Deus hominem rectum, sed ipse se infinitis miscuit quæstionibus." Dismissing, therefore, these questions, which sometimes subvert rather than edify the mind, let this be well known for certain,that he sins grievously who attends to any one of them, especially if he intends to change the form or to introduce choice; because the form of words which Christ expressed ought to be retained immutably, although, according to the philosopher,

+ Purg. 18.

<sup>\*</sup> Lib. Act. Quæst, ad Max. Cæs

transposed names and words signify the same thing.—" Nec utile

per inutile vicietur \*."

"Angels," says St. Bonaventura, "have matutinal knowledge, that is, knowledge of things in the Word; also vespertine knowledge, that is, knowledge of things in se; also meridional knowledge, that is, the open vision of God †." The wise are attracted to that faith, which, partly in effect and partly in promise, secures the same light for the human intelligence. Catholicity seeks, and in part produces, the assimilation of the angelic and the human mind; and assuredly it is not wise men who will disdain its paternal remonstrances, as when St. Chrysostom exclaims, "See what fear, what observance of religion among angels! See what contempt, what negligence among men! The angels glorify, honour, worship, observe, and adore. Men slight, petulantly scrutinize, rashly endeavour to seize more than they can take. The one commend and praise; the other dispute, and arrogate to themselves more than they can understand. The one shade their eyes and venerate; the others strive to gaze impudently, and to behold ineffable glory." Not so the truly intelligent of human kind. They will conclude with St. Isidore, saying,—

"Down reason, then at least vain reasoning down."

And the intellectual result will verify the words,-"non ad parvæ intelligentiæ arcem pervenit qui scit secreta Dei se penetrare non posse t." Before leaving the signal supplied by mysteries, we may observe, that the miracles which Catholicism proposes to our belief form no obstacle to wise men-or rather, that such men will reject the plea of insurmountable repugnance, advanced by those sophists who deny their possibility. Recognizing with the Scholastics, as Leibnitz acknowledges, that the preservation of all monades is nothing else but a continual creation, they admit that we have no reason to refuse believing supernatural events when well attested, such as miracles, which are conformable to the ends of Him who has the power to change the course of nature o.

But further let us observe, that generally to the silent depths of Catholic wisdom wise men are attracted by a natural affinity, so that its character of profoundness and retirement may be said to constitute another issue. Wisdom grows slowly,-" crescit occulto velut arbor ævo." If we credit Virgil, an oak of a certain species descends as deep in roots as it rises high in the air. Pliny quotes

<sup>\*</sup> De Sacro Altaris Mysterio, lib. iv. c. 18.

<sup>+</sup> Compend. Theolog. Veritatis, lib. ii. c. 15.

<sup>‡</sup> De Sum. Bono, lib. ii. c. 1.

<sup>§</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain, lib. iv. c. 16.

the poet for his authority in asserting it\*. Such is generally found to be the mind that has long had its roots in the Catholic faith; and this is the state which is desired by men loving wisdom; who seek not vain publicity and popular display, but secret depth. Sophists, and men of mere book learning, pass by with other thoughts: all their ambition is to produce branches and leaves that will be seen from afar. Ludolphus Kusterus writes from Paris to Dr. Bentley at Cambridge, and says, "I do hier al that I can for to make known your excellent learning, which was not known here but by very few people †." "Respondebo et ostendam scientiam meam: for this above all," adds St. Odo, " is what the arrogant seek, not so much to have, as to display knowledge; against whom Moses says, 'Vas quod non habuerit operculum et ligaturam immundum erit.' But holy preachers regard it their part to enjoy wisdom, internally or externally, to warn others from error, and they never go forth speaking so as to place the joy of their mind in the ostentation of a learned discourse, but they meditate the good things of wisdom secretly in their hearts, and rejoice there where it is felt, not where they are obliged to beware of the snares of temptations 1." Catholicity forms men who are their own public, and content to seek no other. "Il était son public à lui-même," said M. Vitet of M. Soumet, before the Academy. It is satisfied with truth; and so far from courting the applause of a boorish multitude,like some of its disdainful adversaries, challenging it to answer at a county meeting,-it invites the few, including the simplest as well as the wisest, to hear in sacred retirement, as if demanding with the chorus, when about to utter some mysterious lesson, "Who is in the way?"-

> τίς ὁδῷ, τίς ὁδῷ ; τίς μελάθροις ; ἔκτοπος ἔστω, σ**εό**μα τ 'εὕφημον ἄπας ὁσιαύσθω§."

Yet its retirement, in which it is still so expansive, and youthfully affectionate, is not selfish; its high contentment not unfruitful. "What utility," some ask, "in a wisdom that is hidden—that does not show itself? Whence," adds this old writer, "a certain Scholastic says, 'Scire tuum nihil est nisi te scire hoc sciat alter;' but although less wise, I say rather, 'Scire tuum nihil est imo et damnosum, nisi te satagente ex hoc proficiat et alter ||.'" The arts and ambition of the rhetorician are foreign to this wisdom; and the Catholic is, in fact, the Chiloreign to this wisdom; and the Catholic is, in fact, the Chiloreign are foreign to this wisdom;

|| De Gestis Episcop. Turon.

<sup>\*</sup> xvi. 56. † Bent. Correspondence, vol. ii. 495. † Mor. in Job, lib. xxiii. § Bacch. 68.

nian style, as Aristagoras called it, signifying the habit of using but few words, Chilon being noted for employing few. A distaste for very protracted discourse, constitutes therefore a bond of affinity between Catholicism and wise men, who have been always observed to nourish the same antipathy. At a long lecture, Diogenes, seeing that the reader had only one page more of manuscript left, cried, "Courage, friends, I see land." Antonio de Guevara, writing to Don Inigo de Velasquez, says to him, "Your Lordship complains that my letters are short; but I answer, that I ought not to be blamed for using such brevity, since, whenever you wish to ascertain whether a man be a fool or a sage, you have only to put a pen in his hand." Some one complained of the shortness of the discourses of philosophers; and Zeno answered, "they ought even to abridge, if possible, their syllables." Such men would remark with favour the saying of St. Anthony, that faith results from a disposition of soul, but that dialectics are from the art of the contriver. Wise men discern in eloquence a power that often reveals itself in antagonism to truth and justice. "What difference," demands Valerius, "between Pisistratus and Pericles, 'nisi quod ille armatus, hic sine armis tyrannidem gessit \*?" They begin by suspecting him who wields it. Though it be directed against Catholicism, the very man whose cause it seems to advocate, if approximating to the wise, will say,-

" Magis audiendum quam auscultandum censeo."

Or, perhaps, what is more plain,-

"Thing of talk, begone, Begone, without reply!"

"It is not by accuracy or profundity," says a modern author, "that men become the masters of great assemblies. And why be at the charge of providing logic of the best quality, when a very inferior article will be equally acceptable? The habit of discussing questions in this way necessarily reacts on the intellects of our ablest men." He then notices, in one of his contemporary statesmen, the dangerous gift which consists in a vast command of a kind of language, grave and majestic, but of vague and uncertain import, which if admitted into a demonstration, is very much worse than absolute nonsense. Plato shows how foreign to all practical and important purposes is the ability of public speakers. "Of what use," he asks, "is rhetoric? When a city assembles to make choice of physicians or of ship-builders, is it not true that the orator will then have no part to play, since in each of these professions it is the most skilful that must

be chosen? and when it is a question of constructing walls, or ports, or arsenals, is it not architects rather than orators that are consulted? and when the deliberation turns on the choice of a general, or on the order of attacking the enemy, will it not be military men rather than orators that will be listened to \*?" In later times, when it was known that truth had spoken by revelation, such men would feel that the pomp and encumbrance of words belong not to religious counsels; that plainness and brief statements of facts were best.

"Out idle words, servants to shallow fools; Unprofitable sounds, weak arbitrators! Busy yourselves in skill-contending schools, Here we need you not."

As the Count de Maistre observes, twenty monosyllables sufficed to Bourdaloue for pronouncing an admirable criticism on the famous Lettres Provenciales. He was content with saying, "ce qu'un seul a mal dit, tous l'ont dit; et ce que tous ont bien dit, nul ne l'a dit." "For me," continues one who recognizes this affinity, "although I cannot say that I am utterly untrained in those rules which best rhetoricians have given, or unacquainted with those examples which the prime authors of eloquence have written in any learned tongue; yet true eloquence I find to be none but the serious and hearty love of truth." Neither, it is evident, would men of wisdom admit the pert, popular style of attack directed against Catholicism, by men who seek to sting them with, "terms layed in aqua-fortis and gunpowder," as an old poet says; and who seem to confide in the famous boast expressed by Molière,—

" Nul n'aura de l'esprit hors nous et nos amis ;"

as if it lay at the mercy of "a coy flirting style, to be girded with frumps and curtal gibes, by one who makes sentences by the statute, as if all above three inches long were confiscate."

The triumph of wit is not necessarily the triumph of truth. The parodies of the Homeric style by Swift, however irresistible in moving smiles, no more detract from the majesty of the poet than the pleasantries of miscreant scoffers effect the truth or beauty of Divine faith. Errors are often found very attractive at public meetings:—

"Assure you they will prove most passing strange, And wondrous plausible to that assembly."

As our old poet says,-

<sup>\*</sup> Gorgias.

"They are good silly people; souls that will Be cheated without trouble: one eye is Put out with zeal, th' other with ignorance; And yet they think they're eagles."

But wise men are not made just fit for that meridian. They at least will never have recourse to vulgar arguments against any thing, and consequently not against Catholicism: nor will they resemble those who, as Robert d'Arbreselle says, "leaving the straight paths, and transgressing the bounds placed by our fathers, run wild in their inventions; and against the commands of Deuteronomy, plant a wood of words and sentences near the altar of the Lord our God \*." Heresy in all ages has made great use of such characters as are personified by an old writer under the title of " Talkative, of Prating-row," who will talk on any subject, - "of things heavenly or things earthly; things moral or things evangelical; things sacred or things profane; things past or things to come; things foreign or things at home; things more essential or things circumstantial; provided that all be done to their profit." But faith and Catholicism are more thrifty in regard to such expenditure; for as the poet says, borrowing an image from the forest,-

"Words are like leaves; and where they most abound, Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found."

Sage philosophy will lend its ear to brief sententious precepts rather than to those well-ordered words, which Milton says, "like nimble and airy servitors, trip about the true orator at command, and in well-ordered files, as he would wish, fall aptly into their own places." "He is wise," it will admit with St. Isidore, "who is wise according to God: and when any one says in his reproach, that though he speak wisely, yet has he no eloquence, it will conclude with the same holy doctor, saying, "Horret sapientia spumeum verborum ambitum, ac fuco mundialis eloquentiae inflatis sermonibus perornatum†." Moses, after the Divine vision, could speak less than before. "I beseech Thee," he said, "Lord, I am not eloquent from yesterday and the day before; and since Thou hast spoken to thy servant I have more impediment and slowness of tongue ‡."

It is not uncommon to meet with persons, avowedly lost on their way, of undoubted genius, and admirable for the charm of their conversation, who seem every moment to be moved by the attraction of the centre, and about to proceed to it in a straight line, who will talk with untired eloquence on the bene-

† De Sum. Bono, lib. vi. 29. 

‡ Exod. iv.

<sup>\*</sup> Opus Quadripartitum super Compescenda Hæreticorum Petulantia.

fits resulting from its influence, or, in other words, on the advantages and beauties of the Catholic religion, and yet who, on ceasing to speak, stop short in their inquiries, falter, and contrive politely to disengage themselves from those who would lead them to the felicity of which they are in search. When invited to action, the vision fades away; and it seems as if their whole object had been obtained when they had pleased themselves and delighted others, by an eloquent discourse on the truth and beauty of faith and virtue. In the presence of such facts, it is not strange that wisdom should grow suspicious of all eloquence; should teach men at times to be both deaf and dumb -to speak nothing, to hear nothing; and that it should prepare them for attending to truth alone conveyed by silent mysteries, by moral results, and by religious power. St. John Climachus observes, that indifference, or what theologians term 'acedia,' is one of the branches of loquacity\*. Wisdom corrects the evil at its source. Its voice, after each authoritative promulgation, is imperative.

——— "No replies, but reverence.

Man hath a double guard, if time can win him;

Heaven's power above him, his own peace within him."

Yet there are voices to be listened to by wisdom; and it enables men to distinguish them from others:—

"Sapience au commencement,
D'oïr donne homme entendement
De Dieu servir et bien amer,
Mais li fol n'y veullent penser +."

Wisdom, however, leads men towards that Church which extends its domains by the word of heavenly-sent messengers,—authoritatively and not rhetorically, by holiness and not by oratory, announcing truth. On the other hand, observe still an issue to the centre: "for philosophy," says Savonarola, "assists faith, if not by proving its articles, at least by explaining, and enforcing, and defending them‡." This is what the Catholic reason has done from the origin of Christianity to the present day. "For that purpose," says a great author, "it has founded a true philosophy, the friend and helpmate of religion; because it is a philosophy reasonable in its object, natural in its principle, solid in its foundation, sure in its method, happy in its results, and useful in its consequences." They who have tasted its wisdom to the core, find all other depths shallow. The wise are attracted by the profound and beautiful discussions of the

<sup>\*</sup> Scal. Par. xiii. † Quatrains Moraux. ‡ De Veritate Fidei Christianæ.

Catholic school, where is always found the  $\pi o \tilde{v} \sigma \tau \tilde{\eta} \nu \alpha i$ , which is as much needed in the researches with which it is occupied as in any branch of natural science. They are, as we have observed, content to remain on some points with the school in ignorance, saying, with St. Augustin, "here will I rest: donec aliquid certi eluceret quo cursum dirigerem \*:" but they will hear, with no less joy, its high and fruitful lessons developing and explaining truth. Catholicism, in appreciating the wisdom of the poor, who know of no philosophy but their Catechism, can satisfy those philosophers who dislike the syllogistic form, remarking, that some men to whom the rules of syllogisms are entirely unknown, can perceive the weakness and false reasoning of a long artificial and plausible discourse, by which regular logicians have let themselves be caught; and on the other hand, by the ancient usage of its schools, it cannot but recommend itself to others, like Leibnitz, who held "the invention of the syllogistic form to be one of the most beautiful and considerable of human discoveries, as forming a kind of universal mathematics, of which the importance is not sufficiently known †."

We must not remain here to expatiate in praise of the schoolmen, consulting on the sum of things whom even aliens from Catholicity faintly defend, as when the author of "Cosmos" speaks of a predilection for formulæ of scholastic reasoning, more contracted than were ever known to the middle ages 1. late, indeed, we have been told by one eminent author, that "it was only by such an instrument as the quasi-realism of Aristotle that the schoolmen could establish those points of faith which constituted the difficulty of the Romish creed." But though we cannot delay to mark wise men observing that ideas are in God from all eternity,-that they are even in us before we actually think of them; that jurisconsults speak of justice, and of other moral qualities as things-still, without entangling ourselves in the thorny thicket of that celebrated question between the realists and nominalists, which Leibnitz would not dismiss by speaking abusively of one side, and which is not to be decided by an unfaithful and exaggerated statement of the opinions of mediæval realists, we may remark, that assertions of this kind are only to be ascribed to the local position in which some men find themselves when, with the greatest erudition at command on all other points, they are in regard to the Catholic religion more ignorant of what the Church teaches than a Catholic child before learning its catechism. No: the scholastics are not the sort of triflers that they are said to have been by many,

<sup>\*</sup> Conf. v. 14.

<sup>†</sup> Nouveaux Essais, &c. lib. iv. ± i. 63.

who for foolish questions and ridiculous answers, need not be obliged to any of their neighbours; -who tire themselves with examining into and explaining things, which, after they are known and explained, signify not a farthing to the understanding or the memory. Leibnitz explains his reference to an opinion of St. Thomas of Aquin, by saying that he is an author who is accustomed to rest on what is solid \*; as, in fact, Catholicity would never have so esteemed him, had he been one of those false scholastics, who take the straw of terms for the grain of things. Descartes, though with little fruit, borrowed arguments from St. Anselm; and Grotius esteemed Suarez as one of the most profound thinkers that ever lived. The author of "Sketches of the History of Learning in England," observes, "that the writings of John Duns Scotus, the subtle doctor, are marked with a vigour and penetration of thought, which, down to our day, has excited the admiration of all who have examined them." But to climb up to such high rocks as these, you must be a swimmer of Delos; and therefore here we must be content with thus gazing for an instant at them from below. Milton, having in remembrance such men and such ages, fears to produce some noble speculation before his Protestant contemporaries, saving, "I must confess to be half in doubt whether I should bring it forth or no, it being so contrary to the eve of the world, and the world so potent in most men's hearts, that I shall endanger either not to be regarded, or not to be understood; for who is there almost that measures wisdom by simplicity, strength by suffering, dignity by lowliness? Who is there that counts it first to be last, something to be nothing, and reckons himself of great command in that he is a servant?" The scholastics would have suited him better. Even while appearing to object to the extent and symmetry of their intellectual edifice, men opposed to them recognize in what is blamed a noble influence, adding, with a poet,-

"Not that the thirst for system in itself
Hath not a colouring to humanity
In Paradise first given; 'tis a sign
Of longing to regain the plenitude
Of vision, which alone can satisfy
Man's vast capacities and nobler hopes."

Whoever renounces admiration for the Catholic philosophy according to which all tends to the perfection of the whole, is on a road that will not satisfy wise men to the end. We may

<sup>\*</sup> Théodicée, P. iii.

use ancient words, and say, "Hanc disciplinam quisquis infensus vetat; vetat probatum vivere, et sanctum sequi; vetat vigorem mentis altè intendere; nostrique acumen ingenii ad terram vocat:

nec excitari vim sinit prudentiæ."

"The works of the ancient muse," says a French author, "change not, sustained as they are by nobleness of manners, beauty of language, and the majesty of those sentiments which are imparted to the entire human race." It is the same with the sages of the Church: after all they did not cut off and reject the ancient thoughts of humanity; they said, rather, with our poet,—

"Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
To copy nature is to copy them."

And here one might take occasion to suggest, if it could be done now without offending, that if the European civilization during the eighteenth century was undermined by an impious philosophy, which, under a change of form, still opposes the faith on which it depends, the "worm" that preyed, and still preys upon its vitals, could hardly have been bred by means of the classical studies which had been pursued by an Alcuin, a St. Thomas, and a Fenelon. It could scarcely have been through a love for Plato or Cicero, of Homer or Virgil, that atheists conspired to overthrow altars, to abolish thrones, and to corrupt morals. It seems more reasonable to suppose that this worm sprung from the corrupt heart of bad Christians, caring very little for Plato or Cicero, or any other Pagan author, but making a detestable use of the knowledge which they derived from the Gospel, and contradicting the testimony of the classic authors, and that of mankind in all ages, for the sake of flattering their own sensuality and pride.

The seal of wise antiquity, however rejected by some vehement and minute minds, will, at all events, remain attached to Catholic thoughts, however independent and supernatural. So, lately, being confronted with the insane ravings of a public that sought by revolution to change all things on earth, the same calm observer, whose words we lately cited, says, "I shall return with joy to retreat and study, to meditate in repose on the eternal laws of human society, which I do not believe to be changed, notwithstanding the present agitation of Europe." Even an adversary feels the justice of such sentiments. "There are young men," says Goethe, "whom I meet, in whom I have nothing to change or correct; and yet they make me uneasy, because I see them disposed to follow the torrent of their epoch. It is from this disposition that I would guard them. It is not intended that man should follow the blind course of the flood of the world." The same desire

was expressed by another observer when he warned men from interrupting the pursuit of solid hopes, and from leaving a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark on a troubled sea of noises and hoarse dis-

putes. Speusippus placed statues of the Graces in the school which Plato founded. If you will pardon their Pagan origin, you might find that they would not be out of place here where we have a glance, in passing, at the seats of Catholic sages; high above whom might stand, too, with a like reserve, "the placid marble Muses, looking peace;" for Catholic wisdom is never hostile to what either the Graces or the Muses represented, as is remarked by a late writer, who, alluding to the twelfth century, says that "it is a trait of the times to find the same person the chief patroness of piety and of poetry." "The soul is harmonious," said St. Hildegarde, -symphonialis est anima. Catholicism, which has nothing in common with the notion of Aristoxenes, agrees with the philosopher who says, that "we ought to acquaint ourselves with the harmonious and the beautiful; that we ought to contemplate them with rapture, and attempt to raise ourselves up to their height;" and it agrees with him saying, that "in order to gain strength for that, we must keep ourselves thoroughly unselfish, and seek to communicate it." Catholicism will approve only of a wisdom that is humane, consistent with tender compassion for all that is frail, and with profound reverence for all that is sublime.

Those who feel no attraction to the centre here are men like Menedemus, as light as the bird of St. Luke, who did not esteem Plato, while admiring Stilpo very much. Wise men with delight observe the soft, subdued, neutral tones of Catholicity; and when they hear them censured by the passionate,

reply, "color est vitare colorem \*."

Wisdom has not the property of the loadstone, to fall in love with the north; rather affecting that cold climate than the pleasant east, or fruitful south or west. The gracious wisdom of the Church, diffusing harmony through the whole domain of human thoughts, may little suit the audience found on roads that lead wanderers astray. The ox may be painted with wings, but he does not seem better formed to soar. Darkness and frowns are no criterion of weight, either in trees or men. The cedar, spreading its thick branches horizontally over the ground, and showing little disposition to rise, loving a stony, sandy, and meagre soil, is dark and solemn enough; but it is a light wood, weighing even less than the graceful, slender, and elastic fir. Catholicity tends ever to conceal the strength

<sup>\*</sup> Nic Clameng. ii. Epist. 96.

and gravity that it produces, while the wisdom opposed to it would disguise its vanity under a serious aspect, which is a sign, as Cervantes' duchess would say, that "it is indiscreet; for

pleasantry and good humour dwell not in dull heads."

An ancient philosopher used to say, that "conversation with sages was like sacrifice, -useful at all times;" for men, like trees, will sometimes grow up in conformity with the character of those about them; as when Varenne-Fenille found a yewtree growing in the midst of a pine forest of the Pyrenees, having risen up as straight, and nearly as tall, as the pines themselves. At all events, the custom of Simon the tanner, who used to write down from memory the conversation of Socrates, would not be misapplied where men of Catholic minds and habits of thought were heard. Henry Suso, describing these habits, cites the sacred words, "Transite ad me omnes, qui concupiscitis me. Ego mater pulchræ dilectionis; Spiritus meus super mel dulcis, et hæreditas mea super mel et favum ; vinum et musica lætificat cor, et super utraque dilectio sapientiæ\*." Such is the wisdom that is ever with him who is Catholically minded. "It is with him," says Suso, "always (though in secret), at table, on the road, in his chamber, whithersoever he turns, there is nothing in it which displeases him; nothing which does not correspond with the vow of his

Many will be struck with the contrast, when they turn from such men to the stormy, passionate, uncouth sophists who disparage them. Make room for bulls and fools, say the Spaniards. Catholicism invites men to the shelter which wisdom loves. It says with the poet,

zo bujo wien ene poet,

" \_\_\_\_ If you are learned, Be not as common fools."

Let not your mental food be such as they or newspapers supply. "Pretty visitors truly," exclaims Antonio de Guevara, complaining to Don Pedro d'Acunnie, Count of Bueridie, of his being obliged to remain in the world in consequence of his position at Court, "charming visitors, who come to us every day, sit down in easy chairs, and begin to talk; not to ask you about some doubt of their conscience, or some difficult passage of holy Scripture, but to tell you some new murmuration, saying that the king does not sign, that the council will not dispatch, that the treasurers do not pay, that favourites command every thing, that the bishops do not reside in their sees. Must not such talk to a man learned, and a man

<sup>\*</sup> Ecc. 40.

occupied, be like knocking him on the head?" Wise men will not be weaned from the grave and sober element of Catholicism by the pert objections of one who finds such company congenial to his taste.

" Induiturque aures lentè gradientis aselli."

If they must be subject to the influence of the four points of heaven, it will not be by suffering themselves to be hurried hither and thither with those whom we met on a former road, scattered like the withered leaves of a forest in the first blasts of autumn; but by exemplifying, in their natural tendency, what St. Anthony of Padua says, namely, that "the mind of a just man ought to be oriental, pointing east, by the consideration of its birth, or origin; occidental, looking west, by the consideration of its death; northern, by considering the tempests and miseries of this life; southern, by the consideration of eternal beatitude\*." In Catholicism wise men find at the bottom, beneath the most smiling surface, this fourfold direction of mind, favoured, supplied, attainable by all; and they are, in consequence, attracted by its secret power.

From lovers of wisdom, then, Catholicity may expect to obtain a hearing for its profound and lofty themes. Are they by birth or circumstances strangers to it? They will remember that modest doubt is called the beacon of the wise, the tent that searches to the bottom of what they may think worst. Their style is, therefore, that of the poet, replying, "what you have said, I will consider; what you have to say, I will with patience hear, and find a time both meet to hear and ponder such high things." They will not, like the political or sensual sophist, judge of all things without reference to principle or

truth .-

"We may not think the justness of each act Such, and no other, than event doth form it."

They will not be turned aside by a name, heeding those who use vituperative words. They reply to such guides, shouting against Popery, "If you can only gain an amphora of the wine of Mamertin, as old as Nestor, give it what name you like—

'Si detur, quod vis, nomen habere potest.' "

From the vulgar, however exalted in mind, or famous for their misdirected learning, they will turn aside. They find neither order in their thoughts, nor constancy in their sentiments, nor consistency in their actions, nor connexion in the determina-

<sup>\*</sup> S. Ant. Expositio Mystica in Lib. Ps. lxv.

tions of their will. All is by chance, and caprice, and impulse. The Catholic's mind forms, they discover, a counterpart to these, and it is seldom that the contrast proves ineffectual to lead them further than a barren preference. Difficulties, of course, they too may find in the force of circumstances. They may persevere in perambulating long and diverse roads ere wisdom, aided from on high, can obtain the full victory; but once converted, there will be no cause to apprehend future deviations, or a relapse to the life of passion and of error. They will resemble the oak, which attains to the greatest perfection on soils where it is the longest in coming to maturity.

Again, the road of wise men presents an avenue to the Church by a consideration of the pacific character of the Catholic mind. with which wisdom necessarily recognizes its affinity. It is true Catholicism, in one sense, seems to present itself to human pride as a system of aggression and intolerance; for being truth, it necessarily excludes error; and having been promulgated by its Author with the words, "He that believeth not, shall be condemned," it unavoidably concludes, as a general proposition, the necessity of acquiescence in what He has required. Therefore those who are resolved to consider no difference on religion as important, will feel that it proposes not peace with them, but war. They will argue, with Lucian, that no one doctrine should be chosen amidst the variety of opinions in philosophy— εβρις γαρ ές τας άλλας το τοιοῦτον. But wisdom will soon conclude that, as it is no aggression or insult to maintain truth in astronomy or chemistry, so it cannot be opposed to a pacific disposition, to maintain the holy inviolability of moral and religious doctrine embracing all true ideas when taught on sufficient authority. And after all, it is something very different from an article of the Catechism, or an inviolable attachment to it, which causes men to lose sight of equity, and impartiality, and moderation, in their estimate of others, and to become strangers to such easy calms as sit in tender bosoms. Their intolerance is the result of passion, not of a pure love of truth; their rash judgments are produced by selfishness, not by Catholicity. To use the language of a great man, who with a glance detects the real seat of the disorder, "The more any one penetrates into the intelligence and experience of things, of men, and of himself, the more he will feel his general convictions strengthen, and his personal impressions become calm and docile. Equity, rather than tolerance in regard to others, grows and increases along with his tranquillity in his own faith. It is ignorance, and passionate egotism, and preoccupation, which render us exclusive and bitter in our judgments of other men. In proportion as we become detached from ourselves, we enter, without effort, upon a serene and

gentle appreciation of the ideas and sentiments which are not our own. Our Lord has said, alluding, as is generally understood, to the different degrees of virtue in men, which must include their greater or less, their better or more defective use of their intelligence and of their will, that in his "Father's house there are many mansions." "There are also," concludes this author, "many roads here below for virtuous men, through the difficulties and obscurities of life;" and under certain circumstances, we are even taught by Catholicism to believe it possible for them to be united at the end, without having either seen each other on the departure, or met upon the way. Really inspired by Catholicism, men would forget all violence, recoil from harsh jars and rough-voiced war, and find the very

cause for their former rage to pass away. The wisdom of Catholicism must not be confounded with the spirit of man's impatience, when, by recent conversion, or a change of country, either brought for the first time within view of the centre, or placed in a position where it can be seen in a new light by means of contrasts. In both of these situations, the Catholic seems often like Renaud de Montauban in his combat with Roland, when, having received a blow, he was dazzled by the sparks from his own visor. Men newly clad in the impenetrable panoply of Catholicism, or for the first time wearing it in presence of the enemy, can often be observed thus, as if dazzled by the light which it emits when in collision with antagonists. Those who have long worn it are more cautious, and prepared for every thing. It does not seem to them to be an advance in the spirit, either of Catholicism or of wisdom, when they hear of men who see Nineveh without ten just men, and Babylon awaiting fire from heaven, in every strange city that they enter, and who proclaim that there "the devil is seen enthroned, exercising his tyrannical sway over wretched mortals." Human impatience, under both circumstances, is sometimes manifested by expressions which, to wise men, seem but belonging to a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. The road of wisdom leads not by the bursting cataract on the towering Alp, which impresses the beholder at once with the ideas of terror and of sublimity; but it winds through an exquisite, secluded valley, where the delighted wanderer discovers flowering meads, and murmuring streams, and shady groves; and hears the soft, liquid voice of laughing boys, and passes through a region of calm joy, presided over by a spirit which finds good in every thing. On the other hand, for the professed enemies of Catholicism, the way turns in a direction still more counter; for this road of wise men leads far from the angry contentions of hot, fiery disputants, loving singularity and contradiction, who are more disposed to

quarrel with neutrals, than to make peace with enemies, and who, as far as using one of his expressions might be said to have caught the style of Plato, since they are ready to say, at every turn, "This proposition is nothing else to me but a declaration of war \*."

Wisdom, secure in the strength of truth and justice, prompts men to act like the enchanter Maugis in the old chivalrous romance, who, when he observed Charlemagne and the peers falling asleep, so as to favour his own escape, kept calling out to him to wake and be on his guard against himself. When the philosopher desires to convey praise, he asks whether any thing could evince more moderation or calm—"numquid nisi moderate, nisi quiete, nisi ex hominis gravissimi et sanctissimi disciplina†?"

It used to be said in La Bresse, that "if any one who had been bitten by a dog were to stop under a service or sorb apple-tree he would suddenly grow mad." Though foresters, like Varenne-Fenille, very properly laugh at this notion, it is certain that not much more is wanting to produce fits of anger resembling madness in some wayfarers through the forest of life. Recur to those we met before on the roads of the four winds, and of the dry tree, who say to one another, like the Jews,—"venite et cogitemus contra justum cogitationes: venite et percutiamus eum lingua, et non attendamus ad universos sermones ejus ‡."

"Faith, Gospel, all seem'd made to be disputed, And none had sense enough to be confuted."

To escape from them, whither can pacific wisdom turn with greatest security, but to Catholicism; where, if unmixed with human malice, there is nothing more boisterous than the bended knee.—

"Nought more ungentle than the placid look Of one who leans upon a closed book?"

It was a Protestant voice that said,-

"The Church of England doth all factions foster,
The pulpit is usurp'd by each impostor;
Extempore excludes the Pater-Noster.
The Presbyter and Independent seed
Springs with broad blades to make religion bleed.
Herod and Pontius Pilate are agreed.
The corner-stone's misplaced by every paviour.
With such a bloody method and behaviour,
Their ancestors did crucify our Saviour!"

But look only to the natural side,—to the advantages derived by wisdom in regard to human things. There are men with the spirit of that famous charger of Renaud de Montauban, who could not see armed knights without thinking of battle. The sight of wisdom and genius, strong in their calm majesty, inflames them with eagerness for contradicting both. They choose to enter their protest against some one thing, or person, or other, every day; they ask questions in order to contradict those who answer them; they cannot breathe if asked to acquiesce in any measure on which the wisest are agreed; they are resolved to agitate the puddle of their blood by running into parties, literary or political, as well as religious, and they espouse a champion's cause with such ardour, that they run against every thing in their way.

How many men are found deficient in true genius, as in wisdom, who, to use Johnson's words, "as rhetoricians have the art of persuading when they second desire, as patriots gratify the mean by insults on the high; finding sedition ascendant, who are able to advance it; finding their nation combustible, who are able to inflame it; who are admired by the multitude for virtues like their own,-for contempt of order, and violence of outrage; for rage of defamation, and audacity of falsehood!" Whither do such spirits turn wise men, but to Catholicity? in which these impetuous zealots would be calmed to life again; in which there are no new theories of society to be supported by angry eloquence, and a reckless disregard of the misery they may entail. There the kernel of all false philosophy, which disturbs the peace of the world, is detected and rejected. For to observe an instance presented to every one's notice now, Catholicity denies that equality is any where a law or principle of nature; sending us to the forest itself to

> "Ask of our mother earth, why oaks are made Taller and stronger than the weeds they shade?"

And it holds the impossibility of either establishing true equality, or even of ascertaining its existence by such rude, superficial, and almost mechanical methods as human legislation has alone at its command. Wise men are attracted by this feature. They acquiesce in the order of human society as instituted by God. They acquiesce in the Catholic view of the social condition of man, and admire the pacific consequences. Similarly, in regard to the detail of private manners, men endowed with wisdom must love the Catholic principles of duty, inculcating peace, order, submission, reverence, and love. "It is an honour for a man," says Solomon, "to separate him-

self from quarrels; but all fools are meddling with re-

proaches\*."

"The world is inclined to the satiric," says Leibnitz; "but in general one should practise great reserve in attaching credit to satires, however greedily they may be swallowed by the ignorant †." These satirists mingle with the Protestors who take the road of the four winds, that we have left behind us; where each resembles Apollo in the one thing alone noticed by the messenger in the Andromache,—namely, in having revived old quarrels,—

έμνημόνευσε δ', ώσπερ ἄνθρωπος κακός, παλαιὰ νείκη. πώς ᾶν οὖν εἴη σοφός ‡;

Such men are not in their element here. The road of wisdom is sheltered from all fitful blasts of the wilderness; it leads to higher regions, where we find a constant serenity, a wholesome

and delightful repose.

Catholicism, besides removing, at least in part, the cause for just blame, teaches the folly of being angry with men whose faults it says are their misfortunes. It teaches how to love, not how to hate; and it is to this state that men of literature now look back with fond regret, saying that the mediæval works, of which they instance Chaucer's poetry, seem to breathe of a time when humanity was younger and more joyous-hearted than it now is.

The beauty of the Catholic religion, with all its endearing associations, cannot be long concealed from those who are amorous of such light-hearted existences, and of such peace. Though they may begin by saying only that even "if straining a point were at all dispensable, it would certainly be so rather to the advance of unity than increase of contradiction,"

"For points obscure are of small use to learn, But common quiet is mankind's concern,"

congenial spirits will find their centre out.

"The meteor may gleam, in tempest and foul weather," but.

the light which shows its worth,
Must, among gentle thoughts, and tranquil, take its birth."

The force of great minds is not revealed in noisy ebullitions. The higher they become, the less are they susceptible of offence, like the loftier volcanoes, which are characterized by long intervals of repose, while those whose elevation, like Stromboli, is least considerable, are in constant activity as flaming

<sup>\*</sup> Prov. xx. + Nouveaux Essais, &c. liv. iv. c. 16. # 1164.

beacons. It may be curious to watch the latter in passing, but no one would like to live within the sound of their convulsions. Wise men know that the great questions which involve the discovery of the true Church, are not to be solved amidst the angry contentions of a selfish, passionate, and troubled mind; but as Alfonso Antonio de Sarasa says, "Placide divina tractanda sunt; placida enim est veritas, placidus Deus\*."

Catholicism forms, in regard to character, the kind of stuff which wisdom loves, - a cool and solid mind, not to be kindled into a flame by coming in contact with fiery spirits, but resembling the poplar-tree in the perfection of that property; for a red-hot iron falling on a board of poplar, would burn its way without causing more combustion than that of the hole through which it passed. "When reason is to be intimidated," says Calderon, "the best orator is he who keeps silence." This is the conclusion, too, of wise men who are content to let pass whatever belongs to gladiators rather than to sages. Moreover, on a thousand points on which the ignorant are eager for battle, wise men see ground, not alone for neutrality, but for agreement. With them, consequently, it is not always "Saint lago, and charge Spain!" They set out on this road with the formula that signifies the desire of peace, saying, "Dirigat Dominus nedes nostros in viam pacis." To each challenger that meets them, they feel that they might say, like Eve to Adam,-

"While yet we live (scarce one short hour, perhaps), Between us two let there be peace;"

and the further they proceed, the more they discern the wisdom of that charity which secures peace. Now the consequence of such dispositions can never be hostile to the growth of Catholicism; for "who are they who see best?" asks Savonarola. "Those who have most of the light of glory. Who are those? They who have most charity †." "Ecce pietas est sapientia," says St. Augustin. "Porro pietas cultus Dei est, nec colitur nisi amando. Summa igitur et vera sapientia est in præcepto illo primo diliges Dominum Deum tuum ‡." The angels proclaiming peace, had no promises for men of great intelligence, sharp wit, singular penetration: the malignity of whose temper often, in point of fact, perverteth nature; "whose learning makes them more barbarous, whose study of humanity more inhuman, whose converse among poets more grovelling, whose rank in society more pedantic;" but they pronounced it

‡ Epist. 120.

<sup>\*</sup> Ars semper Gaudendi, t. xv. p. ii. Dedicat.

<sup>+</sup> De Veritate Fidei Christianæ, lib. vi.

as the reward of men of good will, from which purity of inten-

tion true wisdom cannot be separated.

Wisdom acts like music in calming the passions. Ælian relates of Clinias, who was a passionate man, that "whenever any thing happened to provoke him, he instantly, before he had time to break out, took up his lyre and played; and when he used to be asked for what reason he did so, his reply was ὅτι πράῦμαι. This taming of the mind, or making it grow mild, removes many obstacles that would prevent men's acquiescence in unpalatable truth.

Catholicism glides imperceptibly into the calm and quiet breast, when its possessor says, with blessed Job, "nec contra-

dicam sermonibus sanctis."

How calm and pacific are all images of Catholicity! How tranquil are its institutions, its manners, its thoughts! How parallel are all its ways to those of nature; verifying what the poet says,—

"Good nature and good sense must ever join;
To err is human; to forgive, divine."

"Men are impatient, and for precipitating things; but the Author of nature," says Butler, "appears deliberate throughout His operations, accomplishing His natural ends by slow, successive steps." Not lost upon the wise are such observations. They hear the Catholic Church, age after age, correcting with mildness, and saying, to explain her moderation, with St. Augustin, "multo est mirabilius et laudabilius libenter accipere corrigentem quam audacter corrigere deviantem \*." They hear her say, with St. Isidore, "Superbi doctores vulnerare potius quam emendare noverunt. Qui delinquentem superbo vel odioso animo corripit non emendat sed percutit †." "Ingenium boni doctoris est incipere a laudibus eorum quos salubriter objurgatos corrigere cupit ‡." They hear her expressly forbidding that narrow, uncharitable scrutiny of others, which wisdom will abhor. "Hominum locutiones," she says, "actus et mores, quorum sanctitas te non ædificat, non investiges, non observes, non discutias, non judices, imo, nec audire neque cognoscere cupias, sed potius studeas nescire \( \)."

The Church, always so eloquent when it is a question of consoling, warning, praising, or blessing, "seems," says the Count de Maistre, "to become inarticulate when it is an occasion of blaming, or only of compromising, by simple criti-

<sup>\*</sup> Ep. 19.

<sup>†</sup> De Sum. Bono, iii. 41. § Joan. Lanspergius, Epist.

<sup>‡</sup> iii. 43.

cism, any thing that ought to be respected. Then she says with the Prophet, 'A, A, A, Domine Deus, nescio loqui \*!'"

Wise men mark her broad and liberal mode of interpretation, conformable to those lines which Neustetter, who hated suspicions and detraction, placed upon his walls,—

"Sit bonus interpres, nil mala verba nocent, Sit malus interpres, nil bona verba juvant †."

They watch the provocations of the adversary, and the reply of the Catholic, who might be described in the words of Vernon.

"——— I never in my life
Did hear a challenge urg'd more modestly,
Unless a brother should a brother dare
To gentle exercise and proof of arms."

They contrast the quiet, retiring, pacific spirit of the one, and the obtrusive, pushing, insolent manner of the other, who seems more anxious to recommend himself by a display of learning beside the question, and often by evincing spite, bad taste, and relentless hate, than to teach or believe anything; as indeed he often has neither the power nor the wish to believe any distinct doctrine, so true it is that if the Catholic principle were to disappear, as the Count de Maistre observes, "there would be nothing Divine left upon earth; for this principle is so powerful, that it sustains even its enemies, who only live by the hatred which they cherish against it, mistaking this spite for zeal; but were we to disappear to-day, they would disappear to-morrow; and," he adds, "a great statesman, the Baron d'Erlach, was so convinced of this fact, that he said once to a Catholic friend, 'we know well that we only exist by you.'" The conclusion of wise men is drawn, in conformity with the old observations of humanity: they arrive at a conviction that Catholics are not aggressors; they observe them unwillingly, calmly, unostentatiously defending their religion; and then, to account for their own decision, they say, with the poet,

"----- Truth hath a quiet breast."

"O quam tuto locatur in throno," says Alanus de Insulis, "cui tranquillitas mentis blanditur! Quam eleganter stravit lectum suum, qui in pace pectoris ordinat animum! Quam secure cubat in lecto, qui pacem disponit in animo. In hac singulariter debet

<sup>\*</sup> Jer. i. 6.

homo esse donec transeat. In hac tendens, dormiat et requies-

This is the state which wise men must covet for themselves, for their country, and for the world. "I do not despair," says Leibnitz, "that in a more tranquil period and nation than our own, men will act more reasonably; for, in fact, one should despair of nothing; and I believe that great changes, for evil and for good, are reserved for the human race; but much more for good than for evil." We should remark, however, that in speaking thus, he looks forward, not to a gulph of confusions, such as rationalism would create, but to purely Catholic results, to the reign of which Catholicism ever seeks to realize the type, of some king, some other Solomon who, by warding off dangers and securing peace, which is necessary for studies, may favour wisdom †."

Pacific wisdom, without compromising truth, can only enter into the soul of an individual as into the heart of a nation, with the Catholic faith, or with principles which have their centre there; for "error," as the Count de Maistre says, "is never calm; to truth only is granted warmth without bitterness; sin-

gular phenomenon not sufficiently remarked."

Wise men, therefore, on the whole, recognize truth in that Catholic course of life which, as Sidonius Apollinaris says, "flows on like a harmless, placid river emanating from a wholesome spring; neither frothy through boasting, nor turbid through pride, nor foul through conscience, nor headlong through passion ‡." They deem it no criterion of greater intellectual freedom to have doubts and contradiction ever cherished with bitter controversy, to stir the constant mood of such calm thoughts. They urge their bark forwards to that ocean of Catholic wisdom, whose depths are deepening peace.

In fine, the universal character of wisdom, which constitutes in itself a certain Catholicity of mind, forms an avenue to the centre, in which meet all roads to truth, where all modes and forms of acquiring knowledge are combined; where the Catholic philosophy "inspires general convictions without opposing the regular and legitimate development of talent, places man in his natural state, in a perfect state, inasmuch as it unites science and authority, reason and faith, and so resolves the great problem of the human intelligence." Wisdom must agree with the Catholic philosophy, in being rational, but not to the exclusion of tradition; and traditional, without compromising the interests of

# Epist. lib. vii. 8.

<sup>\*</sup> Sum. de Arte Prædicatoria, c. xxii.

<sup>†</sup> Nouveaux Essais, &c. liv. iv. 23.

genius or individual thought. So that, seeing from afar the combination that Catholicism offers, of all the true freedom, and all the needful control that the intelligence requires, wise men will say of it, in the Virgilian words—

"Is locus urbis erit, requies ea certa laborum \*."

Catholicism teaches, that before all exterior revelation man possessed no religion or moral truth; but it goes on to show, that Adam had learned his duties exteriorly from God, and that the same knowledge has always been required, and more or less imparted by the most natural of means, namely, by language and tradition, as is indicated in the words, "Olim loquens, in prophetis, novissime locutus est in filio."

Accordingly, an accomplished scholar, speaking even merely of the interests of his own department of knowledge, says, that "the philologer is predisposed to believe that there must be some portion of Divine truth in that which man has, in all ages, accepted as binding on his faith and conscience, and that he handles the recorded utterances of the past with a veneration which satisfies every enlightened believer." Unfortunately, however, this very author furnishes an instance, in the beginning of his great work, of the evil consequences that result from neglecting this rule; for, as a prelude to some philological remarks, as to the difference between πέτρος and πέτρα, the latter, being a rock, considered as including many πέτροι, which difference, he admits, has been shown, by Maldonatus, not to exist in the Syriac, and which, even if existing in the original words, would seem only to extend verbally the promise to all successors of St. Peter, besides that, the gender itself of the latter word obviously removes the objection, he says, "the Protestant divine, in his controversies, would do well to limit himself to philological science, and his triumphs would leave no room for a second fight, if, dismissing all perplexing references to the uncertain echoes of ecclesiastical tradition, he were content to employ no weapon save those of Biblical criticism against adversaries who have raised a fabric of error on their misconception of the difference between πέτρος and πέτρα."

We have not, however, to refer to eminent men for examples of this departure from wisdom by a process that Catholicity would counteract. We live at present surrounded by men who claim an exemption from all want of any external intellectual assistance, independent of their own private judgment or imagination, although, if they confessed the truth, they would say of

themselves, in the words of Æneas.—

—— "Ignari hominumque locorumque Erramus, vento huc et vastis fluctibus acti \*."

A wanderer of this class will call in question, with illiterate sauciness, all that has been taught and believed from the beginning of the world. He, for his part, follows the instigation of his brain, and scorns other helps: he cannot as yet say what his own reflections may establish; but, while waiting, he will have nothing to do with any thing like tradition, saying, that it would enslave his soul. Men of this kind are so fallen out with antiquity, that they will not even condescend to make any answer to the point, when a Catholic presses them with any authoritative promulgation, however conformable to the very letter as well as spirit of the book of God. Only, as is said in the "Pilgrim's Progress," they "look upon each other, and laugh," though not so as to give pleasure to any sound eye; since, for pleasure as well as pain, they have contemplated themselves into ill looks. The dangers of such a state are sufficiently discernible. Modern authors fully acknowledge them. "Experience teaches," says the author of the new Cratylus, "that those who have neither the industry to learn, nor the sagacity to discover the truth, have often the courage to invent; and that there are no limits to the extravagance of perverted ingenuity†." "Every man," says Möser, "may err sometimes in the most incredible manner." These admissions are unavoidable in the absence of Catholicity; for such thinkers, who astonish even the philosophers, remarking how madness will have more followers than discretion, may be said to form now a numerous tribe, not unlike the people of the "yle Gynosophe," of which Sir John Maundevile says, "Theise men lyven by the smelle of wylde apples; and whan thei gon ony forweye, thei beren the apples with hem; for zif thei hadde lost the savour of the apples, thei scholde dyen anon. Thei ne ben not fulle resonable; but thei ben symple and bestyalle." This man, who feeds on the wild savours of a distempered brain, cannot be expected to relish the solid and divine food of Catholicity: but, call you this thing a scholar? Alas! he's lunatic. What fancies! what crude and savage thoughts! what obscure and misty images assail him! Truly, he will soon be fitter for the hospice than the school. Let him have scope thus: propose to him the wildest fancy of the sophist, who writes under the influence of a smattering of science, acting on a feeble mind, and every one who considers his mental state, may use Shakspear's words, and say,-

"I know this will make a contemplative idiot of him."

## As Dante says,-

"He in whose bosom thought on thought shoots out, Still of his aim is wide, in that the one Sicklies and wastes to nought the other's strength \*."

"All theorising," says a philosopher, blaming what he does not seem to perceive distinguishes his own writings, "indicates a defect or stagnation of productive power." The old French adage is clearer and more to the purpose; for it says, "Mieulx vault savoir que penser †." Catholicity, therefore, attracts wise men by inviting them to the light which emanates from intellectual union, and by warning them from trusting overmuch themselves or their thoughts. Others suppose, that they can, with their individual or national strength, pull down the Papal throne, and substitute a higher philosophy for the doctrines of the Catholic Church. But wisdom will dictate different resolutions. How should they succeed in such an enterprise?

— "how vast a work
To assail this gray pre-eminence!"

"On this foundation Truth's high temple stands; Stupendous pile! not rear'd by mortal hands.

Here kings and chiefs, in early ages born, And worthies old, whom arms or arts adorn; Who cities rais'd, or tam'd a monstrous race, The walls in venerable order grace; Heroes in animated marble frown, And legislators seem to think in stone."

Wisdom refers those who reject all aid from traditional wisdom to the studious haunts of learning, saying, with Petrus Cellensis, "Æstimabile procul dubio est quod manus legitur, impretiabile quod animus;" and before the shallow observers of the present race repose too securely on the consciousness of their superiority to what Catholic study and Catholic learning have produced, there are many books, and many branches of philosophy, that they ought to consider; for, according to the profound remark of the Count de Maistre, "in order to estimate an age, it is not sufficient to ascertain what it knows. We must take into account also what it does not know; and our own age," he continues, "as soon as it gets beyond  $\mathbf{a} + \mathbf{b}$ , no longer knows what it says. What skills all its proficiency in the natural sciences, if it knows nothing of morality, or of political science, or of theology? so that, in the most important sense, we may

<sup>\*</sup> Purg. 5.

<sup>+</sup> Le Roux de Lincy, le Livre des Proverbes F., tom. ii.

say, Imminutæ sunt veritates a filis hominum\*." "The great pretension of our age, is to believe itself superior to every other; and the fact is, notwithstanding, that it is inferior, being always in contradiction with the ancient good sense†." I only repeat the words of this remarkable writer.

"Some opinions, no doubt, pass for truths, which are only the effects of custom and credulity; but I am equally convinced," says Leibnitz, "that there are others which certain philosophers would represent as prejudices, which are nevertheless founded on right reason and nature. There is as much, or greater cause for being on one's guard against those who, most frequently through ambition, pretend to innovate, than against ancient impressions. And, after having sufficiently meditated on what is ancient, and what is new, I have found that the generality of received doctrines can be admitted; so that I should greatly wish that men of wit would seek to satisfy their ambition, in occupying themselves rather with building and advancing, than with destroying and retrograding; and I would recommend them to imitate more the Romans, who constructed noble public works, than that Vandal king, to whom his mother said that, as he could never hope to equal the glory of such buildings, he ought to endeavour to destroy them 1." The Catholic Church realizes the intellectual state described in the Book of Wisdom; for, it may be truly said of her, "Scit præterita et de futuris æstimat, scit versutias sermonum et dissolutionem argumentorum; signa et monstra scit antequam fiant, et eventus temporum et sæculorum §." Catholicity, by requiring, therefore, the aid of tradition, as the mode of transmitting primeval and revealed truths, by insisting on the necessity of external assistance for the human mind and for reason, recommends itself to the judgment of the wise, who are so far from contracting that contempt for human testimony, which characterizes the enemies of the Church, that they would agree with Leibnitz, when he says, "I do not know whether the art of estimating probabilities, which rest partly on the opinions of persons whose authority is of weight, would not be more useful than a great part of our demonstrative sciences ||." On the other hand, by its avoidance of a dead and formal routine, with all the abuses of learned study, by combining the use of tradition and learning, with the legitimate exercise of individual reason, Catholicism manifests its truth no less. It ought not to be denied, that men have wants, in this respect, corresponding with what is required by the sons of the forest. "That a tree may prosper," savs Varenne-Fenille, "it must have sufficient

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres, i. 62. + Id. i. 66.

<sup>‡</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain, i. § Sap. viii. 8. || Nouveaux Essais, &c. liv. iv.

space below ground to spread its roots in, and sufficient space in the vague of the air to extend its branches in. Whenever a tree is confined, in one or other manner, its growth is retarded; it languishes, and sometimes dies \*." The advantages of the true Catholic discipline, in regard to the mind, may be represented by another example, still taken from such illustrations as the forest yields; for every heated tanling, who rambles through it, knows how delightful to the feet is the soft moss along the narrow winding by-paths, which avoid the dust and noise of the straight high way. It is true, as on the latter, the central point is always visible, you must, while following the former. now and then go out upon the high way, if you wish to ascertain what progress you have made; but it is to be noticed, that, when once near the centre, you may fearlessly forsake even the winding by-path, and strike off, to the right or left, without danger of losing your way, as you can then easily return to the main road, which itself becomes beautiful, leading over a green lawn, as that round the convent in the forest of St. Germain. on which graze the cattle of the convent, whose bells cause a pleasing harmony. So it is in the forest of thought, where Catholicism guides the wanderer. From the first, he has the advantages of unfettered genius, without incurring the danger of eccentricity, and the more he approaches to religion, the greater is the freedom which he enjoys, while even the common main way of all the faithful leaves the lover of beautiful scenery and of all gracious harmonies nothing to desire. The method of Catholicism, therefore, is not to be confounded with a dull and monotonous routine. It is not Oriental, as sophists pretend, who, while complaining that it is so, would limit its images to those of their own Occidental locality. It is for all. If it supplies your rhetoric with pelican and palms, it leaves you thrush and robin. There may be a vitiated tradition confined to certain regions, and a blind, implicit adherence to certain models. resulting from an unsound method of study.

——" Who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep vers'd in books, and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters,"

The multiplicity of learning ofttimes does but distract a man. These head-scratchers, thumb-biters, and lamp-wasters, become like the antiquary, of whom his servant says, "If the house be

<sup>\*</sup> Mémoires sur l'Administ. Forestière, i. 8.

so old as you speak of, 'twere good you brought my master into it, and then threw 't a-top of him; he would never desire to be better buried." According to such wisdom, to be young even, is crime enough; and to be old in any thing, though 'twere in iniquity, deserves some reverence. Before such men, an ancient writer says, wittily, "that, to excuse one's self, when detected in any vice, and promise to become a new man, is to speak heinously, and add sufficient aggravations in the estimation of any one that shall understand their humour."

Catholicity does not teach that there can be no wisdom without books, like those who, out of respect to Adam, believe him to have written a book, and can tell us even its title, declaring that he wrote the treatise "De Præceptis in Horte Eden latis," of which a great master of book collectors only says, "whether he really wrote or not, deficientibus documentis, pro certo adstrucre non audemus\*." What is the end of study? Let me know. The answer of Catholicity, which shows that there can be wisdom without incessant turning over leaves, recommends itself to wise judgments; for

"Study is like the heaven's glorious sun, That will not be deep-search'd with saucy looks; Small have continual plodders ever won, Save base authority from others' books,"

Learned men without the living spirit which breathes in nature, are often but vainly wearing out their life.

"So study evermore is overshot,
While it doth study to have what it would,
It doth forget to do the thing it should;
And when it hath the thing it hunteth most,
'Tis won, as towns with fire, so won, so lost,'

A blind dependance upon any literary or philosophic guides is as foreign to Catholicism, and might be as fatal to the most important purposes of wisdom, as would be a presumptuous reliance upon unassisted reason and personal observation. Yet how often is such dependance the result of study, where the rule of faith is not adopted! In this respect, the nations of modern Europe may be said to follow the custom of the old barbarians in Gaul. "The Gauls," says Cæsar, "have a custom, whenever they meet travellers, to compel them to stand and relate whatever they have heard or known. Moved by these rumours and reports, they consult about the greatest things, which cause them afterwards to repent, since they have credited uncertain

<sup>\*</sup> Legipontius de adornanda Bibliotheca, &c.

reports and false tales, which have been often framed merely to please them \*."

The universal character of Catholic wisdom which attracts the wise can be distinguished also in that simultaneous cultivation of the head and heart which Catholicism deems essential to philosophy, while absolutely condemning those who would apply to the former without at the same time attending to the latter. Charon, speaking of knowledge and wisdom, says, "that he must observe two things, - the one, that wisdom is much better than all the science in the world; the other, that not only they are different things, but that they hardly ever exist together; that they generally counteract each other; that he who has much science is hardly ever wise, and that he who is wise has often not much science †." Malebranche seems to have been of the same opinion. "Men," he says, "are not born for becoming astronomers or chemists, to pass all their lives before a telescope, or over a furnace. Let an astronomer have been the first to discover land, and seas, and mountains in the moon,-let him have perceived, before any other person, the spots which turn on the sun, and calculated exactly the movements; -let a chemist have found at last the secret of fixing mercury, or of making the alkaëst by which Vonhelmont boasted that he could dissolve all bodies; -are they on that account become wiser or happier? They have, perhaps, established their reputation in the world; but if they have attended to it, that reputation has only extended their servitude. Men may regard astronomy, chemistry, and almost all other sciences, as the amusements of an honest man; but they ought not to suffer themselves to be captivated by their brilliancy, nor prefer them to the knowledge of mant." Catholicism would go further still, and class even the latter, including metaphysics, among studies that are worthless, and often injurious, unless accompanied with a due cultivation of all our natural faculties-of our affections and virtues, as well as of our reason and intelligence; and notwithstanding this prodigious difference, in point of fact, the Catholic is found to be more attractive than the so-called philosophic wisdom.

> "When science, prank'd in tissued vest, By Reason, Pride, and Fancy drest, Comes like a bride, so trim array'd, To wed with Doubt in Plato's shade, Youth of the quick uncheated sight, Thy walks, Observance, more invite!

<sup>\*</sup> Lib. iv. c. 5. † La Sagesse, liv. iii. c. 14. † Recherche de la Vérité.

O thou, who lov'st that ampler range
Where life's wide prospects round thee change,
And, with her mingled sons ally'd,
Trow'st the prattling page aside:
To me in converse sweet impart,
To read in man the native heart,
To learn, where Science sure is found,
From nature as she lives around;
Thou, Heaven, whate'er of great we boast,
Has blest this social science most."

The Catholic wisdom involves whole views of things, however indistinct and imperfect may, in particular minds, be its knowledge in detail. It is essentially natural, because revealed, conformable to the grand and beautiful scheme of the entire creation. Therefore this wisdom and love are never separated; this wisdom and goodness are never separated; this wisdom, and an exquisite appreciation of all that is beautiful, are never separated. So, for a moment, looking from this noble elevation while identifying wisdom with that which falsely arrogates the name, the great poet addresses woman in these incomparable lines:

"When I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself compleat, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discretest, best:
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded, wisdom in discourse with her
Loses d'scount'nanc'd, and like folly shows,"

Nevertheless, Catholicity, which denies the possibility of contradictory truths, recognizes the path of philosophy, including science, as being one of the many tracks which lead to God. It does not, indeed, require all men to follow it. It teaches that there are many others, perhaps safer, and assuredly as happy, if not happier, but it enables those who take it to detect and correct the evils with which they might otherwise find themselves encompassed. Here we find ourselves embosked in a defile that some persons, inspired by an exclusive regard to science, and mistaken in their whole estimate of what constitutes philosophy, will deem impassable in the direction of Catholicism. "Can we enter?" asks Gorgo, with the ancient poet. We may give his old woman's answer:—

Ές Τροίην πειρώμενοι ήλθον 'Αχαιοί.
— πείρα θὴν πάντα τελεῖται.

By trying, all things can be done. By trying, we can dis-

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cover that Catholicism knew somewhat in ages when it was allpowerful. But, indeed, here the difficulty of the road is only in the sophist's or the unlearned man's imagination: for nothing is easier than to pass on to a recognition that Catholicism is no enemy to any truth, and that faith has never proved an obstacle to human genius. Though one cannot remain to support the proposition by historic proofs, which might be followed to an interminable length, it may be observed, that even that ambiguous aggregate, called by its collectors Philosophy, would, by means of Catholicism, infallibly escape from certain errors into which, without that safeguard, the greatest of its admirers and adepts are liable to fall. Come, let us survey the vantage of this ground. "What is philosophy but an undressing of the world?" asks a great modern author. "It is," he continues, "to deprive our thoughts of all those outward veils and vestments, in which they are generally too prone to wrap up the objects of their contemplation; it is to strip eternity of the robe of time, to divest existence of the accident of mortality, to see the soul unclothed and unencumbered with that garment of flesh which weighs it down to death; all this," he adds, "is difficult to the untutored intellect: and yet it is what we ought to do, what we must do, if we would live as creatures that enjoy reason and hope for immortality." Catholicism will not accept this definition of philosophy, and of our obligations. Under its influence men will not act like him who held anatomy to be the ultimate end of physic; nor will they reject "the films and images that fly off upon their senses from the superficies of things; but as men truly wise, they will cream off nature, leaving the sour and the dregs for philosophy and reason to lap up. Can you paint a thought, grasp a sigh, or number every fancy in a slumber? Oh, no! Yet you may sooner do all this, than by any art discover the secret, or disprove the power of that beauty which all but those whom sophistry has blinded, do, shall, and must obey.

"O wisdom! if thy soft control
Can soothe the sickness of the soul,
Wisdom! I bless thy gentle sway,
And ever, ever, will obey.
But if thou com'st with frown austere
To nurse the brood of care and fear;
To bid our sweetest passions die,
And leave us in their room a sigh;
O, if thine aspect stern have pow'r
To wither each poor transient flow'r,
That cheers this pilgrimage of woe,
And dry the springs whence hope should flow;
Wisdom, thine empire I disclaim,
Thou empty boast of pompous name!"

Nevertheless, they who so justly and Catholically think, will not be the less wise and practised in the use of their reason, because the result of their science is to leave the world not stript, but adorned and accommodated as they find it, and the imagination still alive to clothe with beauty language and thought,-because that result is to be a recognition of the realities of time as well as those of eternity, because it is to lead them to combine ideas of existence with the revealed truths that arise out of the accident of mortality; -- "to contemplate," as Pope Innocent III. says, "the stole of the mind and the stole of the flesh, with which the saints are beatified in glory;" and to leave every soul attended with that body which has been given it for companion by Him who equally created both, and who, according to Leibnitz, "following the generality of the ancient philosophers in preference to Locke, and the majority of the moderns, has ordained that all souls, all simple created substances, should be united to a body, and that there never should be souls wholly separated from bodies \*." These conclusions, indeed, may not be difficult to the untutored intellect, for they are suggested by our first universal impressions; but it would be true to add, that this is what must be concluded by the tutored intellect, if we would not make a sophistical use of reason, and substitute a human, and we may add, a frigid and detestable, for a Divine wisdom. "The beginning of wisdom in philosophy," says the Count de Maistre, " is to despise the English idols †." These are certainly what it will not spare. " To be superficial while seeming to be profound; to exhibit every kind of defect,-petitio principii, palpable contradictions, abuse of words, while reproaching others for the practice; immense constructions resting on spider's webs; fatal principles, repetitions, and an insupportable phraseology, reproduction of old errors,for there is no folly that has not been already said by some one,such," concludes an illustrious philosopher, " are the characteristics of Locke's famous book, which the materialists received with avidity-translating, abridging, explaining it: and as Madame de Sévigné says of a somewhat different work, 'lecturing on it with such emphasis, that they seem to have wished their poor disciples to take it as the staple of their nourishment

-le faire prendre en bouillon." On the questions respecting the human understanding, which in later times have been thought for ever disposed of in a sense favourable to modern opinions and wishes, wise men will discover the advantage of metaphysicians having been kept by the influence of Catholicity, in the Platonic, Patristic, and popular

<sup>\*</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain, liv. i.

<sup>+</sup> Lettres, i. 62. VOL. VI.

opinion, that the soul is not wholly dependent on the senses,a tabula rasa, according to Locke, as if God had not made it in His image, and subsequently by revelation informed it, and given it an active power: for after all that can be said, it seems no great proof of progress in wisdom, to prefer the notions of such a writer to those of Leibnitz, who shows that as there are principles in pure mathematics, of which the proof does not depend upon the testimony of the senses, so also natural theology and jurisprudence are full of truths, of which the proof comes from internal or innate principles; who shows that the idea of God. for instance, is innate: that the notion of a tabula rasa, as Locke conceived it, is false in point of fact, for that no such void tablet can exist.—that two individual things can never be perfectly similar,—that their difference is always more than numerical, which observation destroys the notion of the soul's razed tableta notion which only proves the egregious error in philosophy, of having neglected τὸ μικρόν, and who, in fine, concludes that, if there were not means of attaining to these principles concordant with what original revelation teaches, without the senses, we should have neither sciences, nor laws, and not even reason\*. An acquaintance with the moral philosophy and metaphysical systems which are opposed to Catholicity, or illogically associated with it, by those who do not draw the right inference from their own premises, will lead wise men to conclude, with Leibnitz, "that the abuse of terms, or the taking of words for things, leads us back into the kingdom of darkness,that it is inventa fruge, glandibus vesci: and that while the vulgar philosophy," as he says, "admits easily all sort of fictions, that of Catholicism is more severe."

But leaving the domains of such men as our Bonnetty, who study the annals of Christian philosophy, and without entering into the metaphysical advantages resulting from the principles, or at least from the tendency of faith, let us cast a glance at the general consequences of combining science with religion. "Now, though science on arriving may prepare," as the Count de Maistre says, "to achieve its first exploit, which is to take religion by the throat," it is clear from the beginning, that the study of natural truth might lead to Catholicity; "since," as St. Bonaventura says, "from the greatness and beauty of creatures, we rise to contemplate the power of the Creator, and the beauty from which all that loveliness must emanate \(\gamma\)." It is already a step in advance towards the Catholic philosophy, to recognize, with Leibnitz, "that nature is nothing else but a product of Divine art, insomuch

<sup>\*</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain, liv. i.

<sup>†</sup> Itinerarium Mentis in Deum.

that every natural machine is composed of a multitude of infinite organs, requiring, consequently, in Him who has made and who governs it, an infinite wisdom and power \*." But wise men will also soon perceive the immense benefit conferred upon those who apply to the study of the sciences by that practice of combining it with a parallel advance in morals and theology, not by confounding methods of investigation, which should be always kept distinct, but by avoiding the danger of an exclusive and isolated application of the intelligence. Foresters, in laying down rules for observation in the sale and cutting down of timber, take pains to insist on the necessity of leaving always standing those parts of the wood which serve to screen the rest from dangerous winds. They say that in Germany the predominant winds to be guarded against come from the West and South; while the forests near the Baltic are most endangered by tempests from the North. If the same precautions be observed in regard to the moral wood, men will be careful to leave standing all natural defences against the spirit which would separate science from religion, and a belief in the Mosaic records rightly interpreted. Leibnitz, speaking of the laws which God has ordained for observance throughout nature, says, "that his own remarks on optics would alone suffice to show that a consideration of the final cause is not only conducive to virtue and piety in morals and natural theology, but also to the discovery of hidden truths in physical science †." And even were it otherwise, -since for men of science, as for all others, the summum bonum is a happy existence,—we may be still permitted to remark, that the knowledge of scientific truth is not alone sufficient. What is real scientific knowledge without faith, without Catholicism? One need not ask to what purpose serves all dabbling in geology, chemistry, and botany. " I had wandered about in all sorts of science," says Goethe, "and had early enough been led to see its vanity. I had, moreover, tried all sorts of ways in real life, and had always returned more unsatisfied and troubled." St. Augustin had the same experience: as he declares, invoking Divine truth, and describing his own many falls: "ubi," he adds, "non mecum ambulasti, docens quid caveam et quid adpetam-neque in his omnibus quæ percurro consulens te invenio tutum locum animæ meæ, nisi in te, quo colligantur sparsa mea t." What dignity, again, does science, separated from religion, confer on any one? "Under Bonaparte, science," says a great French author, " was servile. These astronomers pretended to have no need of God; and therefore they had need of a tyrant \( \)."

<sup>\*</sup> De la Nature en elle-même.

Confess. x. 11.

<sup>†</sup> Ibid. § Chateaub. Mém.

"Fools had ne'er less grace in a year For wise men were grown foppish, And knew not how their wits to wear, Their manners were so apish."

What security, even in regard to scientific truth, does an irreligious philosophy impart? "Philosophorum credula gens," says Seneca. "Nothing truer," adds the Count de Maistre; " ours believe every thing excepting what the Church teaches: they devour every kind of miracles excepting those that are proved." These are the men who at one time admit all the absurd pretensions of a Cagliostro, fanatically believing in the inspiration of his "doves \*;" and at another, on the first report of some scientific journal, will receive with enthusiasm the intelligence that there can be a communication between two snails. by means of sympathy, across the Atlantic, while obstinately, blindly refusing to believe, with the loftiest and deepest intelligences, in the communion of saints. These are the men who esteem themselves Galileos, for the sole reason that not one of them would hesitate to occupy himself with scientific calculation in a Church while mass was saying; who relate, with immense complacency, that "when a boy, that philosopher observed during the performance of Divine service, that the height of the vaulted roof of a church might be measured by means of the time of vibration of chandeliers suspended at different heights!"-though they should remember that it was not this fortuitous circumstance which can invest their irreverence with dignity. These apish philosophers, "when they but taste the grammates and principles of theory, imagine they can oppose their teachers." Confidence leads many into errors. A confounding of methods, though it be to spite religion, is no advance in science. The wise mind, whether in regard to theology, politics, business or law, is not to be formed by the head alone, and an exclusive employment of the methods used in the exact sciences. "The excellence of mathematics," says Burke, " is to have but one thing before you: but he forms the best judgment in all moral disquisitions, who has the greatest number and variety of considerations in one view before him, and can take them in with the best possible consideration of the mere results of all." In moral science, the heart and conscience must be consulted: in that branch of knowledge, adjuncts and circumstances, though very slight, vary the matter; and he who should require the mathematical proof in regard to any of its divisions, would be guilty of a ridiculous, and, perhaps, of a fatal "A scientific, exclusive of a moral education," says the error.

<sup>\*</sup> Dict. des Sciences Occultes, i. 289.

Count de Maistre, treating on the destruction of the Jesuits, "produced the terrible generation that overthrew the altars and killed the King of France\*." This brings us back to sights too fearful for the feel of fear. This discloses what poets have described in allegoric imagery, haggard scenes within a wood—

"Horrid shapes, remorseless as an infant's bier, Laughing and wailing, grovelling, serpenting, Showing tooth, tusk, and venom-bag, and sting. O such deformities!"

Of what advantage to science was such perversity? And besides, again it may be asked, why should virtue be sacrificed to science, if we were to suppose the latter irrecoverably hostile to it? Mark the grave sophist, who says slyly to his intimate friends,—

"I can talke of phylosophie as well as the best, But the straite kinde of lyfe I leave to the rest."

What work of his composition does not deserve, as Cervantes wittily says, to wear a sanbenito, or some badge, whereby it may be known to be infamous and destructive to good manners? Certainly, those were wiser generations which preferred a good education to all knowledge: "since," as Plato says, "absolute ignorance, in which, by the way, they certainly were not involved, would be better than all intellectual acquisitions with a corrupt education." Οὐδαμοῦ γὰρ δεινὸν οὐδὲ σφοδρὸν ἀπειρία τῶν πάντων, οὐδὲ μέγιστον κακὸν, ἀλλ' ἡ πολυπειρία καὶ πολυμαθία μετὰ κακῆς ἀγωγης γίγνεται πολὸ τούτων μείζων ζημία †.

But we are not driven to such a dilemma. On the contrary, morality favours all scientific penetration. "Conatur caro et sanguis," says St. Augustin, "recta depravare, aperta claudare, serena obnubilare ‡." The flesh, if uncontrolled, darkens more or less, and confuses the plainest things; and a cold, godless heart, can never assist the head in its discoveries. Apollo, the

god of prophecy, was also the god of medicine.

In the application of trees to certain purposes, it is found necessary to remove the heart of the wood, as being void of elasticity; but it is not so with men. There is no good object gained by taking the heart from them. The ancients thought that the heart is the first thing formed in man. At all events, it is the last thing that ought to be sacrificed; and vain is the

<sup>\*</sup> Cinq Lettres sur l'Education Publique en Russie.

<sup>+</sup> De Legibus, lib. vii. 

‡ Lib. de Op. Mon. c. ix.

science that grows by its contraction. The interests of science require, as we have already heard, no such sacrifice. Of Solomon we read, "dedit ei Deus latitudinem cordis sicut arenam quæ est in littore maris." He was not, for that reason, the less skilled in scientific observation.

Catholicism does not enslave the understanding in consequence of its tendency to make the heart too great for what contains it. Plants, while living, produce heat. The trees of the forest, on this account, are good company, and may teach philosophers to esteem less a cold, abstracted life, like that of Sir Thomas Browne, lost in the quincunx of the ancient gardens, while his king dies on the scaffold, and he looks coolly on. A philosopher, speaking of the first French revolution, says, "Je n'avais ni adopté ni rejeté les nouvelles opinions,-mon impartialité politique ne plaisait à personne." No wonder truly. To style such indifference political impartiality, is significative of the separate, isolated cultivation which Catholicism St. Gregory Nyssen mentioning his sharpness against Eunomius in the defence of his brother Basil, holds himself irreprovable, in that "it was not for himself, but in the cause of his brother; and in such cases," saith he, "perhaps it is worthier pardon to be angry than to be cooler."

Catholicism would combine light and warmth, knowledge and virtue, science and religion. "Domine, in lumine vultus tui ambulabunt," it says of its philosophers, "et in nomine tuo exultabunt tota die, et in justitia tua exaltabuntur\*." Catholicism can never separate morals and religion, goodness and piety, from wisdom. It rejects the pretensions of mere science, which would dispense with blessed life. "What is blessed life," demands Alanus Magnus, "but security of mind, and perpetual tranquillity? this," he continues, "will be produced by greatness of soul, and a tenacious constancy in living virtuously. This will be attained if purity of mind be perfect; if in all actions we observe order, mode, decorum, an innocent and benign will intent on

reason, and never departing from it +."

Dante beholds examples of a contravention of these high rules where such imperfections are purged away, and to one sufferer expresses his astonishment, saying.—

"How chanc'd it covetous desire could find Place in that bosom, 'midst such ample store Of wisdom, as thy zeal had treasur'd there #?"

Wise men will perceive that the interests of science are not

<sup>\*</sup> Ps. lxxxviii.

promoted by renouncing the Catholic method of association, and the habit of imparting unity to all studies. "Our naturalists," says Goethe, "believe that they get their knowledge oftener by separation and division, than by union and combination; more by killing than by making alive." Wise men will not ascribe the imperfect state of natural sciences in the middle ages, to the sublime and rational views propounded by St. Bonaventura, when he teaches us to neglect no one order of truths through an exclusive attachment to another. "The light of philosophic knowledge," he says, "is threefold, as illuminating and guiding man to the truth of life, to the truth of science, and to the truth of doctrine; or physical, logical, and moral. There are six differences of the light descending from above; namely, the light of holy Scripture; the light of sensitive knowledge; the light of mechanical art; the light of rational philosophy; the light of natural philosophy, and the light of moral philosophy." Of which six illuminations he proceeds to show the imperfection, adding that, "being all of this life, they must needs have their vespers, their evening; because all this science will be destroyed; but there will succeed to them the seventh day of rest, which has no vespers, for it is the illumination of glory. Thus all our knowledge," he concludes, "ought to be anagogical, to lead us to God, that the circle may be completed \*." As an instance, he speaks of metaphysics being "a study that relates to the knowledge of all beings, which it reduces to one first principle whence they proceed, according to rational ideas, to God, as their beginning, and end, and mirror." Then in another book he shows how all natural investigations should be combined with sacred studies, in order that in every way the mind may be guided to God. order of duration," he says, "situation, and influence in the book of creatures declares His infinite power; the order of Divine laws, precepts, and judgments, in the book of Scriptures, the immensity of His wisdom; the order of Divine sacraments, benefits, and retributions, in the body of the Church, the immensity of His goodness. He, therefore, who is not enlightened by such splendours of created things, is blind; he who is not roused to vigilance by such cries, is deaf; he who does not praise God from all these effects, is dumb; he who does not discern the first principle from all these signs, is a fool. Open, then, your eyes; direct your spiritual ears; open your lips, and more your heart, that in all creatures you may behold, hear, praise, love, worship, magnify, and honour your God; lest otherwise the universal orb should rise against you. Say, then, with the Prophet, 'Delectasti me, Domine, in factura tua, et in

<sup>\*</sup> De Reductione Artium ad Theologiam.

operibus manuum tuarum exultabo\*." He shows, however, that the unwise, instead of profiting by all studies, only fall into greater darkness by the use they make of light. "For of natural, rational, and moral philosophy," he says, "all these sciences have certain and infallible rules, as if lights and rays descending from the eternal law into our mind. And, therefore, our mind irradiated with such splendours, unless it be blind, can be led, as if by the hand, by itself, to the contemplation of that eternal light. But the irradiation and consideration of this light suspends the wise in admiration, and, on the contrary, fills with perturbation the unwise, who will not believe that they may understand, so fulfilling the prophetic voice, 'Illuminans tu mirabiliter a montibus æternis, turbati sunt omnes insipientes corde †."

The Catholic school, therefore, approves of men embracing all knowledge. What ignorance or malice to doubt it. Have the enclosures of the Church no food for minds, no streams to recreate the intellect? "Aut non habent illæ sylvæ," as St. Augustin asks, "cervos suos recipientes se in eas, et resumentes, et ambulantes, et pascentes, recumbentes, et ruminantes ‡?" Truly there are those who find in her literature all that their nature seeks for, and who say, alluding to it,—

"Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori, Hic nemus, hic toto tecum consumerer ævo."

But if the Church sanctions men pursuing the studies of human and earthly, or at least unnecessary things, it teaches them also to ascend from the rudiments to the heights, and to sanctify which is also to render useful for themselves those studies. It says, in the style of Plato, "We should ask ourselves at intervals, for what purpose do we say this or that, study this or that \( \)?" For what purpose are we occupied? It places no obstacle in the way of scientific progress, further than by weaning men from an excessive attachment to all that perishes; and it cannot avoid creating that impediment to a Sabbathless pursuit of a secondary object. During certain periods of the world, the attention of the wise may be withdrawn from the natural sciences; "sed licuit," it says even then, with Rupertus, "semperque licebit cuique dicere salva fide quod senserit | ." It is not, therefore, by hitting some one great point of universal attraction that the Church wins wise men to herself, but by combining all centripetal influences.

<sup>\*</sup> Itinerarium Mentis in Deum.

<sup>+</sup> Id. c. iii.

<sup>#</sup> Confess. xi. 2.

<sup>§</sup> De Legibus, lib. iii.

<sup>||</sup> De Div. Officiis, lib. i.

Catholicism is the ocean to which all studies of the wise are tributary streams; and to him who would desire another Amasis to drink up this sea, the old answer would be, in part, applicable; "Yes, willingly, if you will stop the rivers that flow into it." Learning, as well as science, receives from faith the same encouragement, the same direction. Under that central influence, it is inseparably combined with sincerity, and every holy virtue. Hence the dignity of learning, with our fathers, its fearless, independent character; for, as St. Augustin says, "quod didicerunt, hoc crediderunt, et quod crediderunt, hoc docuerunt." Hence the religious character imparted even to the rudiments of learning; for Alanus Magnus represents grammar and rhetoric as commissioned by faith to come to the service of the young.

Without affirming, like Luther, that true theology is merely an application of grammar, or with Scaliger, that ignorance of grammar is the cause of all religious differences, the Catholic philosophy represents grammar as a necessary attendant upon theological erudition. "Grammar," he says, "comes to the dis-

ciple,—

Grammaticæ doctrina prior præcepta sophiæ Complet, et in juvenem descendit tota, nec in se Fit minor, immo magis crescens grandescit in illo. Omne quod ipsius decernit regula, canon Præcipit, et dictat artis censura magistræ; Indolem juvenis confert, ne verba monetet Citra grammaticam; ne verbo barbarus erret, Barbaries quam nulla notat. Sic ergo loquendi Recte, scribendique viam sectatur, et artem Assequitur, damnat vitium, toleratque figuram,"

The art of composition and of elocution also comes to him,-

"Succincte docet illa loqui, sensusque profundos Sub sermone brevi concludere, claudere multa Sub paucis, nec diffuso sermone vagari. Ut breve sit verbum, dives sententia, sermo Facundus, multi fecundus pondere sensus."

But all the while good faith supplies her instruction keeping pace with the scholastic lessons,—

"Illa docet vitare dolos, contemnere fraudes, Fœdus amicitie, fidei vim, pignus amoris, Illæsa servare fide, nec nomine falso Pseudo vel hypocritam simulare latenter amicum \*."

<sup>\*</sup> Encyclopæd. vii. c. 5, 6, 7.

Thus in Catholicity all literary instruction is combined, directed

to unity, and sanctified by the intention.

With respect to the actual results respecting literature, obtained during the middle ages, the question does not concern us here; though we may remark in passing, that there must be some great mistake in those histories which represent Catholic nations formerly as left in a state of ignorance. In the thirteenth century, Matthew Paris mentions, that "an English ambassador on one occasion said, 'Our nation is learned in three languages, that is to say, Latin, French, and English." In Spain it was not a prodigy when the four daughters of Ferdinand and Isabella were accomplished in the Latin tongue, without having been left untaught how to sew with their needles, and to spin. We cannot delay to observe details. It is sufficient at present to know that Catholicism throws no obstacle in the way of learning, as some have most wantonly affirmed. One accomplished English scholar lately has asserted, "that the grammatical studies which the Romans had borrowed from the Greeks, were utterly lost in what he styles the dark ages;" and he adds, without distinguishing epochs of repose from those of a fresh barbarism invading Europe, "it is sufficient proof to refer to the fact that the Latin idiom degenerated into a barbarous jargon, without inflexions or syntax;" but such sweeping affirmations will not stand the test of even a moderate study of the mediæval literature. The pages of Hugo, of St. Victor, and countless others, are sufficient to disprove it. The Greek language, of course, though by no means unknown, had not then pre-eminence; its importance was admitted, as was that of the Hebrew. "The Latin language," says an old writer, ignorant, or heedless of its superior antiquity, " is the last and humblest of the three languages used in the title that was put up; but, although the last, it was the nearest to Christ hanging on the cross \*." The Latin became the language of the learned; and of course its cultivation in regard to purity depended, in some measure, upon the state of the world as it was alternately ravaged by barbarians, and delivered from the confusion of such wars; but that "the downfall of literature was mainly owing to the influence of the Romish Church, that the papal authority was openly opposed to the diffusion of secular knowledge, that nearly a thousand years of darkness intervened, till the human mind, awaking, like Epimenides, from its long slumber, found all things altered but itself; that the Romish Church throve by the ignorance which it fostered, and that it fell" (it is always fallen or falling) "by means of the learning which it had always opposed †;" are propositions that will startle a continental scholar even after reading the recent letters which,

<sup>\*</sup> Burius, Rom. Pontific. Notitia.

on a different subject, evince, in so remarkable a manner, the power of prejudice on an English mind. Occurring, as they do, in a work of excellent erudition, it is sufficient to say that these propositions are painfully untrue; for the state, at least of continental historical knowledge, at the present day, may dispense any one from the task of disproving them.

It is now allowed, however, even by some English writers, that the Reformation, "instead of effecting the restoration of learning, only contributed to its discouragement and depression; that in England, most of the youth betook themselves at that epoch to illiberal employments; the profession of learning becoming for the first time without support or reward; and that the century which ushered in this revolution had contributed less to our national literature than any preceding space of equal time since the Norman Conquest."

In conclusion, we may remark, pointing to the Catholic Church, the signal which is constituted by meeting the very men who realize in themselves this true, rational, and at the

same time moral and Divine wisdom.

In the forest of life, as in the natural wood, men are apt to mistake one tree for another. It used to be said at one time by travellers, that in Siberia and on the Altaïck mountains were vast forests of the cedar of Lebanon; but when Ferry visited them, the error was discovered, as he ascertained that it was only the Cimbra pine, which the rude inhabitants mistook for the cedar \*. "I remember," says Varenne-Fenille, "that in 1767 some labourers working in the Pyrenean forest of Athas, seeing that I was curious about trees, told me that at a short distance from where we stood I should find a cedar of Lebanon, I went in search of it. It was a yew, a poisonous yew, to which these mountaineers had given the name of cedar †." So do some wanderers, who have never seen persons Catholically wise, give to protestors and rationalists the name of wise men; but the error passes when the reality is seen, or when an experienced person comes up to point out the difference.

With regard to what is excellent in wisdom, it is in the world as in a wood where our senses can easily mislead us. It is only by a chance approximation that we judge of the height and thickness of trees. Imperceptibly, year after year, they increase in size. It is only by means of an instrument and calculation that one can determine the value of the timber. Yet, after a long absence, the change is perceptible, as to those coming from without, the wisdom within the Church is manifest. Oh,

+ Sur l'Admin. Forestière, ii.

<sup>\*</sup> Delamarre, Traité de la Culture des Pins.

what noble sons of the intellectual forest once covered all this ground! Yes, truly,—

"Great men have been among us; hands that penned, And tongues that uttered wisdom,"

A celebrated author of the present day seems struck with this fact, and disposed for a moment to draw the right inference, saying, "Sir Thomas More is one of the choice specimens of human wisdom and virtue; and he believed the doctrines of the Catholic Church. A faith which stands that test will stand

every test."

Recur to past ages. Witness the holy Fathers, the schoolmen, the mystic guides who taught with them. Follow down this history of Catholic philosophers to the present day, remarking the teachers and disciples, who at each epoch seemed to be peculiarly adapted to meet the errors that successively prevailed; and at the same time observing the long, unbroken line of wise men, not alone those living apart, occupied in studious retirement, loving truth, but those also thrown in the midst of society, exercising different professions, high and low; the latter often exactly verifying the remark of Cervantes, that "the mountains," as he had found by experience, "breed learned men, and the cottages of shepherds contain philosophers;" confirming thus the historic fidelity of the poet when he says,—

"Bless'd were the days when wisdom held her reign, And shepherds sought her on the silent plain; With truth she wedded in the secret grove, Immortal truth! and daughters bless'd their love."

Observing, I say, this long, unbroken chain, composed of such various characters, all practically and Divinely wise, continuing to think, as far as principles are concerned, on religion and morals, as the martyrs, the holy Fathers, the schoolmen, the mystic guides, and the fervent population of the middle ages, had thought before them; and then say, granting all the defects of knowledge in former times, what other path can be proposed that will offer equal advantages to those who wish to avail themselves of all true light, while consulting the interests of the intelligence and of the heart.—

"For wisdom's sake, a word that all men love; Or for love's sake, a word that loves all men,"

we should turn to the centre which attracted them. There is that Church which, in these later, proud generations, has heard herself accounted old and obsolete, and the keeper back of improvement; which, though convinced of the injustice of the charge, has not been troubled by it; since, in fact, as a learned author says, "she has no novelties; she grows no wiser. Her newest creed is fourteen hundred years old. She has not improved or widened her faith since that; but where are the literatures, philosophies, sciences, and political systems, which in every generation have risen up to supersede this old and unimproving faith?" Observe the men, and women too, who adhere to this wisdom, and watch those who, with more or less of daring, dissent from it. "Compare," says Balmes, "the men who followed the road which the Church pointed out, with those who left it. Contrast St. Augustin with Roscelin: St. Bernard with Abailard. By which of these were the true interests of science best understood? Let me be shown how the intelligence of the former was diminished or confined by the influence of that much-dreaded authority of the Church, by the usurpation of the Popes on the right of the human mind \*."

Four moral dispositions, according to Plato, are essential to philosophy, "veritatem amare, et mendacium odio habere,—a cupiditatibus liberari—morositatem et agrestes mores fugere—Concinnis et ingenuis ornari moribus."—We find all these imparted by Catholicism, where its action is not resisted.

Would you observe the combination of philosophy with the three holy virtues? See pass any of the illustrious men described in the old Catholic literature. What can be opposed to an Augustin, to a Basil, to a Thomas of Aquin? Or, leaving such kings of thought, repair to humbler walks; and following Sidonius Apollinaris, let him show you a Claudianus, "that most ingenious, learned, and acute man,-qui indesinenter salva religione philosopharetur. O what grace was on his tongue! how he explained the whole state of things to all, without doubt, without haughtiness! Mindful of the human condition in all its variety, he used to console clerks with his work, the people with his discourse; the sorrowful with his exhortations. the destitute with his assistance; the captives with their ransom, the hungry with food, the naked with clothing; but while he thus enriched his conscience through the hope of future retribution, he studied to conceal his merits." Then he adds these lines commemorating his intellectual attainments.-

> "Triplex bibliotheca, quo magistro Romano Attica Christiana fulsit; Quam totam monachus virente in ævo Secreta bibit institutione,

<sup>\*</sup> Le Protest. comparé au Catholicisme, &c. c. lxxi.

Orator, dialecticus, poeta, Tractator, geometra, musicusque Doctus solvere vincla quæstionum, Et vérbi gladio secare sectas Si quæ Catholicam fidem lacessunt \*."

The wisdom of such men was not their own, not temporal, not of this world; it was received in and through the medium by which all intellectual good is communicated to the human race; being, at the same time, an earnest and a certain anticipation of eternal felicity. Therefore Rupertus said to Cuno, bishop of Ratisbon, "I doubt not but that every single eye beholding you will rejoice with you, on account of the light of the Word which radiates from your tongue. I above all will exult, and not for a time only, but for ever, in that eternal exultation to which I know that you also tend †." So burned the primitive and the mediæval lights for the illumination of the Church; and when the later period of the world began, which announced the dangers that now encompass it, other lamps were lighted, which still diffuse their lustre through this night, in which so many, passing near and far off, are preserved by means of their steady and clear beams. These are they who seem so wonderfully to fulfil the prediction of the book of wisdom. "Justus cor suum tradet ad vigilandum diluculo ad Dominum qui fecit illum, et in conspectu altissimi deprecabitur.-Si enim Dominus magnus voluerit spiritu intelligentiæ replebit illum; et ipse tamquam imbres mittet eloquia sapientiæ suæ, et in oratione confitebitur Domino: et ipse diriget consilium eius et disciplinam, et in absconditis suis consiliabitur. Ipse palam faciet disciplinam doctrinæ suæ, et in lege testamenti domini gloriabitur. Collaudabunt multi sapientiam ejus, et usque in sæculum non delebitur 1."

In the forests of Ætna, the Abbot Joachim contemplated the same race of sages succeeding as faithful teachers and preachers—" qui et terrena carnaliaque corda omni plaga percutiant, ac erectis et tumidis magisteriis silentium studiis suis ponant. Doctores vigilabunt solicitudine vitam suam componere, pusillanimes confortare, simplices instruere, inflatos sententia humiliare, reprobos et duros terribiliter increpare §." One of these men was the sage who first received the stranger entering, while yet a boy, upon the way that would, but for his own fault, be that of safety; venerable priest, who too soon, alas! was taken from him, and to whose holy memory he would, in conclusion, albeit with a most unworthy tongue, leave the passing tribute of

<sup>\*</sup> IV. Epist. xi. ‡ Lit. Sapientia, 37.

<sup>+</sup> De Div. Officiis.

<sup>§</sup> Abb. Joachim sup. Hierem. viii.

a heart that, wanting in all other respects, can still hope that it is grateful,—

"Since his dear soul was mistress of her choice, And could of men distinguish her election, She had sealed him for herself."

The faith of the Centurion, united with an extraordinary clearness of intelligence, the reserve characteristic, perhaps, of his order, united with the finest, warmest nature, the devotion of a novice joined with that deep fund of practical good sense, the least common of all things, though designated as common, without which the best qualities lose half their value, a thorough, and therefore very mean, though carefully concealed appreciation of the moral worth of the rich, and a most hopeful. indulgent view of the lower classes, an intimate conviction of the blindness and vanity of the many, while avoiding all singularities that might discourage the weakest from seeking to be admitted secretly amongst the few, such were some of the characteristics of this Catholic and truly wise man. Under a calm, and even at times somewhat cold exterior, for experience had taught him to mistrust the great, who, he knew, cared little for what he valued most, and some of whom he saw ready to barter their ancestral faith for the privilege of a vote in Parliament, no one had a greater or more affectionate heart. It was his pride, if it were lawful to say he had any shadow of such imperfection, to render service to a friend; it was his vengeance, if he ever felt that he had an enemy, to make him his friend, or what was, in fact, synonymous, the friend of God. A counsellor of many who consulted him, under the most complicated circumstances, with a piercing glance he could in a moment discern which was the path of duty; and, with an authority that silenced all resistance of the passions, he obtained its fulfilment. It has been said that it is characteristic of the order of which he was a member to prefer a life in celebrated cities. Be that as it may, an observation of the activity of his very energetic mind had naturally suggested to his superiors that his proper place was amidst the busy and troubled missions of the capital. Yet when he repaired, under obedience, to his beloved Stonyhurst, no poet ever returned with greater pleasure to solitude and the groves. From his deep, practical knowledge of the world, statesmen might have learned wisdom of government; while, from his daily exercises of piety, children could learn the simplicity which is their sweetest attribute. Deficient in no branch of human learning, yielding to no one in the depth of his admiration for all that belongs to the highest mysticism, he retained what is most difficult, as Tacitus says, and perhaps,

as the greatest of Christian philosophers, would also admit, ex sapientia modum. The beauty and wisdom of the Divine offices constituted a theme on which he loved to discourse. Every anniversary seemed to suggest to his thoughtful mind some new observation respecting them; but there is one day in the year when the Church sings words that he loved above all others to repeat, as in fact they referred to that wisdom which had formed his own character, and guided him in all his intercourse with men. On the 17th of December, the Church, as every Catholic knows, in the anthem of the Magnificat, invokes the true wisdom, saving, "O sapientia, quæ ex ore altissimi prodiisti, attingens à fine usque ad finem fortiter, suaviterque disponens omnia, veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiæ;" well might he hear and repeat these words with a happy breast, for this is the road he had always followed, this is the model he had always imitated.

And now, still looking back to this departed sage, let us ask, Who is there that from his heart makes use of this invocation, that can be left long in doubt as to the truth of the religion which inspired him?

"———— Can you conceive, that he
Whose every thought's an act of piety,
Who's all religious, furnish'd with all good,
That ever was comprised in flesh and blood,
Cannot direct you in the fittest way
To serve those Powers, to which himself does pay
True, zealous worship ————."

Dull, stubborn things, void of soul, whose perverse judgments still are governed by the malice of their will, may persevere in rejecting such wisdom and such authority; but for plain, straightforward, and sagacious men, what skills further controversy? The way is open, the guide is at hand.

"——— We are but fools
To trifle in disputes, or vainly struggle
With that eternal mercy which protects us."

Who can utter that prayer for intellectual good, however long banished from it, without having before his eyes, I do not say one true philosopher, like this great priest, whom we must leave in the sublime distance of the eternal world; but the whole Catholic Church extended over the world, Time's monument, antiquity's example, the gray pre-eminence of which, whether in regard to its authority, or its intrinsic wisdom, nothing can obscure.—

<sup>&</sup>quot;Extat ut in mediis turris aprica casis."

There is the focus of that sweet and powerful influence; there is learned that strength and gentleness, that universality of direction, and that moderation of form, that love, strong as death, sweet as invincible, which constitute the prudence of the wise. Those who deserve to be admitted amongst them will turn from all ways to it, and find their centre out. Other men will waver, ask for delay, and finally, perhaps, lose all sounds and tracks that might direct them,—

"Dum dubitant, seram pepulere crepuscula lucem Umbraque telluris tenebras induxerat orbi \*."

"Oh! that those we have left behind," exclaims a young nobleman, writing recently from Rome, "could but see and experience the joy, the peace, the happiness which we now feel; a happiness which would be almost too great, were it not tempered by the continual remembrance of the many dear friends whom we have left still wandering far from this completed form of all completeness, this high perfection of intellectual content!" What is this but the scene so beautifully related by Virgil, repeated in the moral forest? It is the episode of Nisus and Euryalus, in real life. You remember the lines,—

"Silva fuit late dumis atque ilice nigra Horrida, quam densi complerant undique sentes: Rara per occultos ducebat semita calles. Euryalum tenebræ ramorum onerosaque præda Impediunt, fallitque timor regione viarum."

How many are there now who feel the grief of Nisus, when they perceive that some companion of their youth has been kept back from following them? Yes, there are voices that now awaken such Virgilian echoes,—

"Euryale, infelix qua te regione reliqui?
Quare sequar? Rursus perplexum iter omne revolvens
Fallaçis silvæ, simul et vestigia retro
Observata legit, dumisque silentibus errat †."

He who thus so loudly and affectionately calls, measures back his steps through the entangled thorns in hopes that his voice may yet reach the belated straggler, who, having completely mistaken the points of the compass, has perhaps become wholly bewildered as the evening shades now thicken around him,—

"Eripe, nate, fugam, finemque impone labori. Nusquam abero, et tutum patrio te limine sistam‡."

<sup>\*</sup> Met. xv.

Such is the cry that many a devoted friend is now uttering through the dews of night. Alas! it has not been the destiny of each to hear a familiar tongue responding,—

"Jam jam nulla mora est; sequor, et qua ducitis adsum \*."

But lo! a new way invites us; still following those who approach the Church through affinity with truth.

## CHAPTER II.

THE ROAD OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.



HE forest is full of objects that are associated in youthful and popular minds with the book of God, that recall the trees of the Bible,—the scenery of the Bible. A solemn and beautiful avenue here opens before us, which might be called after any of the great Catholic names that will be for ever suggested by a recurrence to the Divine pages.

Here we pass under majestic boughs that may raise up before our mind's eye the trees under which Abraham invited the angels to repose in the vale of Mambre, which Isidorus, who lived in the reign of Constantius, assures us that he saw with his own eyes; the woodland vale, in which the kings of Sodom and Gomorrha were overthrown; the oak of weeping, under which Debora, the nurse of Rebecca, was buried; the wood upon the mountain, prescribed to be cut down by Josue for the tribes to find room to dwell in; the palm-tree under which Debbora sat and prophesied; the oak in Sichem, at which Abimelech was made king; the oak of Thabor, where Samuel told Saul that he should meet three men, who would offer him loaves; the bramble, which suggested the apologue of Joatham respecting that ancestor of the same family of the forest, which was invited by the trees to be their king. Here, too, at times, are passes that recall the rocky gorge through which Jonathan and his armourbearer climbed on hands and feet; the woody hill of Hachila, where David hid himself from Saul; the craggy rocks of Engaddi, accessible only to wild goats; and the cave in which David spared his enemy. Here again we may be reminded of the wood of Jabes, and of its oak, under which the bones of Saul and of his sons were buried ;- of the oak-tree on which Absalom was slain, and of that forest-school in which Solomon so long studied, when he treated about trees, from the cedar of Libanus unto the hyssop. Here are recalled the cedar-trees and the fir-trees which Hiram gave for the building of the temple, thirty thousand workmen being employed in divisions to fell them. Or we may be reminded here of the forest itself of Libanus, in which Solomon built his own house, with cedar pillars; of the turpentine-tree, under which the old Prophet found the man of God sitting, and of the juniper-tree, under which sat Elias, after going one day's journey into the descrt. Rushing waters, too, wander along rocky channels, like the torrent of Carith, by which dwelt Elias the Thesbite, when the ravens brought him bread and flesh morning and evening. Nor are we left without the wild bees and their honeycombs, which can recall the forest where honey was found upon the ground. The wild bees in the woods yield a greater quantity, and a better quality of honey and wax than those which live in gardens, so that in the forests of Poland, Courland, and other provinces of Russia, in Pomerania, and in Prussia, as in southern regions, and especially at Nuremberg, there are courts of justice of the guardians of bees \*. The high, inspired language of the prophets is recalled, too, by what is found in the woods, as in the instance of the reign of the Just One, foretold by Isaias, under the figures of the cedar, and the thorn, and the myrtle, and the olive-tree, planted in the wilderness with the fir-tree, the elm, and the box-tree together. Ezechial, too, is remembered prophesying, and speaking of the cedar to be planted on the high mountain, and of all the trees that shall know how the Lord has brought down the high tree, and exalted the low tree; and dried up the green tree, and caused the dry tree to flourish. And again, speaking of the Assyrian empire, and saying "how the cedars in the paradise of God, the fir-trees and the planetrees, could not be compared with that lofty one among the trees of pleasure." This forest can awaken, also, a remembrance of Daniel predicting judgment on Baltassar, and speaking of the lofty tree that he saw, with beautiful leaves, and wide-spreading branches, which was to be cut down and dismantled, and from which beasts and birds should fly; it can recall, at every step, by instances of vegetable destruction, the ivy that in one night perished, for which Jonas mourned while wishing, with a zeal that God condemned, to destroy Ninive; it can recall the oaks of Basan, which Zacharias invited to mourn for the cutting down of the forest that denotes Jerusalem. fine, directing men to the New Testament, the woods can

<sup>\*</sup> Cotta, Science Forestière.

remind them of the fig-tree by the way-side, condemned for not bearing fruit; of the sycamore-tree, into which Zacheus climbed, boy like, and approved, in order to see Christ as He walked by; and, lastly, of the olives of the mount to which our Lord withdrew in solitude to fulfil the duties of his assumed humanity by

prayer.

How soothing is it, and worthy of a poet, methinks I hear some comrade here exclaim, to wander through a forest thus, thinking of the trees of the Bible! "It seems that you take pleasure in these walks, sir." Well then, since Massinger's words may be rightly applied to you, we can proceed now with more confidence. This venerable road, in ancient times, was followed, not only by a sapient throng expressly prepared to serve as guides, but also by a fervent population, impressed with a conviction that this constituted the direct avenue to the Catholic Church, from which it was thought, notwithstanding the fate of some few obstinate stragglers, that no one taking it could turn willingly his eyes. But in these latter ages of the world, such darkness has come over the whole forest of life, obscuring brightest things, multitudes, as we observed on a former occasion, are misled even upon this road, which belongs, by exclusive right, to the Catholic Church; men are seen wandering on without discovering the truth of Catholicity, while actually selecting this very track as the way to lead and keep them farthest from it, calling out to others as bewildered as themselves to follow them, saying that they should confine their feet to this road for ever, without looking forward or behind, and assuring them that by such constancy they will never arrive at the centre where is found the Catholic Church, the image of which, distorted by the medium through which it is conveyed to their eyes, causes them such displeasure.

Truly, the aberrations of some men are wondrous strange; but having, on a former road, observed sufficiently their error in

this respect, no one would wish here to return to it.

"——— Satis est inamabile regnum
Aspexisse semel, Stygios semel isse per amnes \*."

Beneath these beautiful calm forest domes, it is better to dismiss all sinister comparisons, and proceed in peace to remark the signals which exist at every turn to direct men to the immense felicity which a faithful and just use of the Holy Scriptures can supply.

In the first place, the Catholic Church is seen upon this road, as having, by its authority, promulgated the sacred volume,

composed and arranged as it now exists. It is to the Church, authoritatively declaring what was to be accepted, and what rejected, that men, even those who profess to ignore and renounce her authority, are indebted for its possession. Efforts, indeed, have, from time to time, been made to reverse this state of things. Some, exercising their assumed right of private judgment, have been disposed to pick and choose, in regard to whole books, and chapters of the Bible. Luther, in this respect, as is well known, was restrained by no diffidence; but, on the whole, as far as important purposes are concerned, their criticism has been obliged to acquiesce in the ecclesiastical sentence, and to retain and reject the books that it decided should be retained or rejected. Even in those localities where the Protestant criticism has prevailed so far, as regards the general opinion respecting the right of excluding certain parts of the Scriptures, a tardy homage, we are told, has been paid to the truth of the Catholic testimony; for "many of the most eminent biblical scholars, of those places, still ranged formally against it, are now of opinion, that the first reformers acted hastily and unwisely by rejecting the ἀντιλεγομένους books; and that a fairer and betterinformed criticism has assigned to them that place amongst the Christian commentaries of which they had been formerly so unjustly deprived."

In the second place, we may consider how Catholicity is discerned as the central source of all holy, sincere, rational esteem and veneration for the sacred volume. The Catholic Church has seen men pretending to a purer and higher inspiration than that which produced the Bible, rejecting, in toto, the sacred treasure of the Scriptures. In England itself, the Bible has been proclaimed by fanaticism to be a thing abolished, as containing beggarly rudiments, milk for babes. "Christ," said the preacher, whose act is related by Hume, in his History of the Commonwealth, "is now in glory amongst us, and imparts a farther measure of His Spirit to His saints than this Bible can afford. I am commanded to burn it before your face;" and so putting out a candle in his hand, he said, "here my fifth light"—for he had already put out four, as symbolical of other whims-"is extinguished." The Catholic Church has seen, in some countries at least, Protestantism accepting the views of general infidelity, respecting the truth of the Chinese chronology and history, as subversive of the Mosaic, and leaving it to Catholic scholars to prove, that the earliest date of their empire is after the call of Abraham \*." Against Moses and the New Testament, men, opposed to Catholicism, listen to every flippant writer, whether dabbling in geology, or relating his travels in the East; but,

<sup>\*</sup> Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript. tome xv.

as the Count de Maistre says, "Every age has its absurdities, which must be allowed to pass. The critics fall, one after the other, like the leaves of autumn. Moses and the miracles of our Lord, with the Catholic Church, remain \*."

The Church, in handing down the Holy Scriptures, has taken care in every age to show with what reverence she regards them. In the office of consecrating a bishop, the pontiff who officiates, demands of the person elected, saying, "With authority, and sincere charity, we interrogate thee, most beloved brother, and ask,-Si omnem prudentiam tuam quantum tua capax est natura, Divinæ Scripturæ sensibus accommodare voluerist?" It is evident, that the Catholic Church regards the Bible as one of the two great sacred deposits confided to her care. Its spirit is her spirit. She lives by the same life that inspires it, and by no other. "The sound of a bell," says St. Anthony of Padua, "conforms itself to all songs, and every one may sing to it. So should be the preacher's voice. The sound of a bell, when it passes to us over water, is rendered more sweet; and, in like manner, preaching, when it passes over the waters of the Holy Scripture, becomes more delightful to the ear of God 1." The Catholic Church, in her reverence for the Holy Scriptures, will admit of no tampering with the text, no attempt to adorn or improve it. So William of Bamberg, abbot of St. Peter's at Mersburg, says, in his Paraphrase of the Canticles, "Sometimes I repeat the same verses; for those things which the Holv Spirit has repeated, in the same words, it does not appear improper for me to repeat in the same verses." Every thing in the Church bespeaks her reverence for the Sacred Scriptures. Her theology, her festivals, her ritual, her preaching, her religious orders and institutions, her laws, and, in fine, her manners, yield sufficient evidence of the fact. Accordingly, it is Catholics who, in all their conflicts with the spirit, legislation, and manners of the world, let the ephemeral form of its philosophy be what it may, are observed to take refuge in the Divine testimonies, exclaiming, "Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum, et lumen semitis meis \( \oldsymbol{0}\)." "The worldly and animal man," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "does not know the things of the Spirit of God. Therefore, he will not enter the third school, to study in the book of the Scriptures, but he turns to the books of the philosophers, and has in hatred the other, which is a sign of reprobation in the Gospel ||." The Catholic, by adhering to the Sacred Scriptures, through respect for the authority of the

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres du Ct. de Maistre, i. 127.

<sup>†</sup> Pont. Rom. de Consec. Electi in Episc.

<sup>‡</sup> Serm. ii. de Apostolis.

<sup>§</sup> Ps. 105. || De Nat. Virg. Mar. c. i.

Church, remains unaltered in his opinions, while the separated world is alternately rejecting the Mosaic account, and returning to it through regard for that philology by which, it now acknowledges, can be demonstrated the primeval unity of man. Catholic, constant to the Bible, in obedience to the Church, has nothing to change or retract, when the philosophy of grammar at length achieves a victory over scepticism in demonstrating, from the organization of language, the impossibility of the human invention of language, and a progression from barbarism to metaphysical perfection. In the end, therefore, the free-thinker, supposing him really to merit the name, finds himself not more advanced than the Catholic child, who was content with receiving the biblical accounts as the Church had received and given them. "Minds, in the Middle Ages," says the Père Cahier-he does not say hands, it is true-" were full of the Holy Scriptures \*." I should like to know if it is not so still in every country purely Catholic; that is, where rationalism has not entered along with heresy? Indeed, the reverence and love with which they were then regarded, is repeatedly shown, even by men who still linger among opponents of the Catholic Church, as by Maitland, in his History of the Dark Ages. It was then, that the advice of St. Jerome was followed to the letter, when he said, "Transfer your love of jewels to the science of the Scriptures." As Thomassin remarks, "It was the custom even to attach the Gospel to the necks of children +;" as it still continues to be a Catholic usage to wear the beginning of St. John's Gospel, as forming an epitome of the whole of the Christian religion. St. Gertrude, we read, made extracts from the Bible, for the purpose of assisting her in converting others. To places where she knew there were few copies of the Sacred Scriptures, she used to send books by which souls might be won to Christ; and for this object, she used to labour from morning till vespers, often denying herself time for meals and for sleep. She ever had in memory the sentences of Divine Scripture, applicable to the occasion or person she conversed with; for, whenever she had to reason with, or console any one, she always used the testimony of the Scriptures. She could never be satiated with their admirable sweetness, and with the investigation of the hidden light which she found in them, which caused in her heart a continual jubilation 1. It would be endless to cite similar instances. We may note, however, the words of St. Paulinus of Aquileia, addressed to Henry, Duke of Friuli. "Sanctity," he says to him, "consists in works of justice, and

<sup>\*</sup> Monog. de Bourges, lv.

<sup>†</sup> Traité des Jurements, ii. c. 3.

<sup>‡</sup> Insin. Div. Pietatis, seu Vit. S. Gert. lib. i. 5.

justice is fulfilled by obeying God. All the series of the sacred books is written for our learning, and intones in our ears, again and again, what man should follow, and what he should avoid; in which books your dignity knows how to exercise itself; for, by them our Lord and God speaks to us. Let us recognize, then, and consider with what honour such a legation should be received by us. If a king should address letters to us, how readily we should postpone every thing else to read them; and, when the King of kings deigns to direct His letters to us, by the Prophets and Apostles, ought we not to feel zealous desire to read them with all devotion \*?"

But it is essential to remark that this veneration and love for the Holy Scriptures, emanating from Catholicism, is a holy, sincere, and rational movement, and consequently very different from the impressions which can be often observed in those who reject, while holding the Bible in their hands, the authority of the Church. "Ama Scripturam," says St. Jerome, "et carnis vitia non amabis." Schisms are reckoned among these vices of the flesh. It does not follow, then, that all who declare the Bible constitutes their religion, must therefore love it in the sense of the holy Fathers. Men will confound things, and affirm that they love it; albeit, considerations infinite do make against the truth of what they say. For there is a miserable cant about the Bible, well known in certain societies, which, through disgust and horror might direct men to the Church, where we may confidently affirm it is never found. Catholic who loves the Scriptures, will never present a revolting contradiction to their contents in the open tenor of his life and manners: but heresy has sometimes formally, and often secretly and indirectly, sought to combine a very lax morality, and a very great cupidity for gold, to say nothing of rebellion, and violence, and injustice, with an esteem and religious regard for the Holy Scriptures; and those sections of choosers, who still are following Calvin in their doctrines, may not be wholly and in every instance uninfluenced by the same ambition. Fielding lashes this detestable vice in the person of his Parson Trulliber, exclaiming, "Lay up my treasure! what matters where a man's treasure is, whose heart is in the Scripture? There is the treasure of a Christian!"

Now, it is a sincere, not an hypocritical or a conventional regard, which Catholicity produces for the Bible; and hence arises a contrast which may serve to guide observers. For how many cry ever the Bible is our religion, and the religion of all Protestants, who, in point of fact, either know very little about

<sup>\*</sup> S. Paulin. Pat. Aquil. Lib. Exhortationis ad Hen. Ducem. Forojulien, cap. 9.

its contents, or take but very moderate pains to practise what they read in it. "You are a Papist because you do not read your Bible," said a very rich minister, who soon after had to fly his country to escape the punishment of outraged laws. "It is little," say the Constitutions of the Hermits of Camaldoli, "to read the Holy Scripture. Nay, it is of no use whatever to peruse the sacred books, if their contents are to be forgotten, or if they are not to be followed \*."

St. Isidore of Damietta, writing to Pharismane, eunuch of the palace, reproves him for this inconsistency. "They say that you read the Scripture-very much, and that you apply its sentences to all persons; but it is reported also that you are avaricious." There are instances of the biblical student of this kind proceeding at last to imitate the Albigenses, of Bezières,

by flinging away with scorn the sacred volume.

"I thought where all thy circling wiles would end,"

might every Catholic then say to him, too late for other ears; but,-

"What pilot so expert but needs must wreek Embark'd with such a steers-mate at the helm?"

In fine, to observe a rational, as distinguished from an absurd, inordinate, superstitious regard for the Scriptures, it is to Catholicism that we must turn. Heresy produces an exaggerated and false estimate respecting the duty of perusing the Bible: an unmeaning and silly propensity to transfer its mere phraseology to common conversation, an irrational substitution, however combined, sometimes, with philological erudition, of the letter for the spirit of the book; an illogical distinction between accepting what is mentioned in the Bible, and what is supported by other, though conclusive evidence; and in general a vague, superstitious notion respecting its contents; all times, persons, and places, being confounded, and all just and accurate views lost sight of; as if the religion of Protestants were to convey some of the secrets professed to be taught in the famous century of inventions, published by the Marquis of Worcester, as "how to use all the senses indifferently for each other; how to write in the dark, and how to converse by jangling bells out of tune." Fuller, for one, was not tempted to fall in love with characters formed by the Protestant use of Scripture. "She doubts of the Virgin Mary's salvation," he says in his quaint style, describing one of them, "but knows her own place in heaven, as perfectly as the pew she has a key to. She is so taken up with faith, she has no

<sup>\*</sup> Constit. Erem. C. in Reg. 73.

room for charity. She overflows so with the Bible, that she spills it upon every occasion, and she will not cudgel her maids

without Scripture."

Without involving ourselves, however, in the dark and unsatisfactory labyrinth, through which we should have to pursue such errors, let us proceed to observe the wise and admirable discipline of the Catholic Church respecting the use of the Bible, and the signals that are set up, as it were, along this whole road, by means of that discipline.

The study of the Holy Scriptures, in the first place, is intimately associated with every just idea of Catholicism in its strictest form. How dearly the Bible was prized in the monasteries of the middle ages, is sufficiently known to all who have even a slight acquaintance with their history. Maitland, in his work on "the Dark Ages," adduces abundant proof. " A copy of the Scriptures," he observes, "used often to be the only treasure saved by some devoted monk from a general pillage by Normans, or from a conflagration." Another observer from the same camp takes occasion to point out the care that the poorest monastery evinced to possess always a complete copy of the Bible ;—he shows that the monks loved it, and ardently studied it; and that it is a calumny without a shadow of foundation, to declare that the monks were careless of it, "The monks," he says, "were true lovers of the Bible, preserving and multiplying Even," he adds, "the defective and worn-out Bible in the Abbey of Leicester, speaks volumes to the praise of the ancient monks of that house; for it was by their constant reading that it had become so thumbed and worn \*."

The monk, or abbot, we find, was frequently a man that could be described, as was Peter the venerable, "one profoundly versed in the Bible,—utrumque Testamentum memoriter retinendo†." Dom Gattula says, that "Mathew of Bergamo, a monk of Mount Cassino, who died in 1545, could repeat, by heart, many whole books of the Old and New Testament‡." "Each week the whole Psalter is read through by the hermits of Camaldoli §." Hear what is said to monks by an ancient rule, "Cogitanti de Scripturis somnus obrepat; evigilanti primum aliquid de Scripturis occurrat; dormientis somnia memoria aliqua de Scripturis sententia condiat ||." The rule of solitaries recommending the assiduous study of the Scriptures, says, "nemo enim potest sensum Scripturæ sacræ plene cognoscere, nisi legendi fami-

+ Bib. Clun. 619.

<sup>\*</sup> Merryweather, Bibliomania in the Mid. Ages.

<sup>‡</sup> Hist. Cassinensis, xi. 692. § Constitut. Erem. Cam. c. 18.

<sup>||</sup> Regula B. Ælredi, c. xxix. ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg.

liaritate \*." So a celebrated and humble monk of the order of Grandmont used to say of his own writings, "quæ dico non ex proprio sensu profero; nam ea ex ingenti Scripturarum prato floribus cœlestibus asperso, inops ægerque collegi†." Father Marchese, in his history of the saint, relates that "the only book which St. Peter of Alcantara took with him on his preaching missions in Estremadura, was the Bible, from which he derived that manner of preaching which wrought such miracu-

lous effects at Rodrigo, Badajos, and elsewhere 1." It is significant to remark, that to the present day a love and veneration for the Scriptures is associated in the mind of infidels with the monastic character; and in this respect, it must be confessed that they are far better informed than their Protestant allies. So a recent traveller relates, that "a young Spanish liberal, the Alcalde of Corcuvion, replied to him on one occasion of his mentioning the Bible, 'Yes, I remember I have heard that the English highly prize this eccentric book. How very singular that the countrymen of the great Bentham should set any value upon that old monkish book!' Yet, when hypocrisy can serve their turn, these very men who cannot lie, excepting when they have a mind to it, or when it turns to good account, who call the Bible, with truth, a monkish book, are heard the next hour to cry, 'Down with the monks and friars-viva el Evangelio!' leaving us to infer from the context of their exclamation what must be their estimation of the Gospel." But it will be said by strangers from a hostile intrenchment, that however familiar the religious orders and the clergy may be with the sacred Scriptures, a knowledge of their contents is not found with the laity where the new opinions have not opened a way; that it failed utterly in Catholic times, as the poet says,-

"When want of learning kept the laymen low, And none but priests were authorized to know;"

and that a resolute stand must be made against "Popery," in order that Protestants may retain possession of the Bible, which it is endeavouring to wrest from them. To reply to this objection, and to calm these fears, some delay is necessary in order to observe the usages and discipline of the Catholic Church in regard to the general use of the Divine books.

In the first place, we shall do well to notice the fact so often pointed out, that in the beginning whole societies of Christians

# Ch. viii. x.

<sup>\*</sup> Reg. Solitariorum, 38, ap. Id.

<sup>†</sup> Levesque, Annales Ord. Grandimontis, Cent. ii.

existed without having any copy of the sacred books, from which to cull religion; a circumstance from which it is but strictly just to infer that the conclusion of those who would deem insurmountable their own objection, founded on a want of Bibles, real or pretended, among Catholics, is ungrounded. Faith may exist without biblical studies, as the Bible is derived from the Church, and not the Church from the Bible.

"If," says the Count de Maistre, "it were proposed to the Emperor of Russia to abolish his two senates, and all his tribunals; and if he were told that each pleader had only to read the legislative ukases and the codes, to know whether he was right or wrong, what would the prince say? And if it were added, that to extinguish all law causes, his majesty needed only to order translations of those ukases into Russian, Finnish, Esthonian, Laplandish, Armenian, Georgian, Tartarian, and Kamtschadatian, and to multiply copies by hundreds of thousands, in order that there might not be in his vast dominions a single shopkeeper, fisherman, or coachman, who had not a copy of the laws, what again would the sovereign say? Certainly at the first glance he would see, as the result of this profound measure, the multiplication of law-suits, extravagant interpretations, and analogous judgments. This folly, however purely hypothetical, is only the exact image of the biblical folly." In one of his lucid intervals, a French sophist, who is most esteemed by the enemies of Catholicity \*, has well said that "God himself could not make a book on which it would be impossible for men to dispute." The testimony of history and experience is, at all events, decisive, and the poet, while yet a Protestant, does but follow it, saving,-

"This was the fruit the private spirit brought;
Occasion'd by great zeal and little thought.
While crowds unlearn'd, with rude devotion warm,
About the sacred viands buz and swarm.
The fly-blown text creates a crawling brood;
And turns to maggots what was meant for food.
A thousand daily sects rise up and die;
A thousand more the perish'd race supply."

But, waving such considerations, we must proceed to observe that a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures was recommended from an early age to all the faithful, without distinction of class or profession.

The Père Thomassin has collected many passages to show how anxious were the holy Fathers to induce the laity to read them. "Let no man answer me," says one of them, "with those stale and absurd words, clearly to be condemned. I have law-suits in the courts, I have public business to transact; I exercise a trade; I have a wife and children; I am a man in the world; it is not for me to read the Scriptures, but for those who have renounced the world. What sayest thou, O man? It is not for you to read the Scriptures because you are involved in innumerable cares? Nay, it is more your business than their's. For they do not need the Scriptures, but you, who are tossed by the waves, do require them. Monks, philosophizing with all tranquillity in their huts in the desert, without distractions from worldly cares, are comparatively safe; but we, who are surrounded with dangers, should be armed continually with the Scriptures\*."

"This fancy," says St. Chrysostom, "that only monks should read the Scriptures, is a pest that corrupts all things; for the fact is, that such reading is more necessary for you than for them. To think the law of God a superfluous thing, is worse than not to read it; for these are words uttered with diabolic meditation †." Many have sacred books, beautifully written, enclosed carefully in cases; not that they should read them, but that they should display their riches and ambition. What profit have they in the letters of gold? Truly I do not forbid the acquisition of books. I rather enjoin it. But this I

say, that we should have the letters and the sense in our

hearts 1.

"It has been supposed," says the Père Thomassin, "that the reading of the Bible was wholly abandoned by the laity, from not considering that the canonical office was a continued reading of nearly the whole Bible, and that the recitation of the office by laymen, and even women, has always been common. "On a jugé de tous les siècles passez par la négligence et l'indévotion des deux derniers. Nous tâcherons de détromper le monde sur ce point dans cet ouvrage §." In the world, nevertheless, so notorious is the fact of the Bible being familiar to every Catholic nation, that one of its poets, without questioning it, speaks of the passing away of the old Catholic civilization as a subject of regret on that very account.—

"Devons-nous regretter ces jours anciens et forts Où les vivants croyaient ce qu'avoient cru les morts. Jours de piété grave et de force féconde Lorsque la Bible ouverte éblouissait le monde!"

<sup>\*</sup> Ap. Thomas. de l'Office Div. et de sa Liaison avec l'Oraison mentale.

<sup>†</sup> In Matth. Hom. ii.

S. Chrysostom in Joan. Hom. xxxi. ap. Id.

<sup>§</sup> Thomassin. de l'Offic. Div. &c. p. 101.

BOOK VI.

"The fact is," says Carranza, in the prologue to his commentaries on the catechism, cited by Balmes, "before the heresies of Luther had come out to the light of day, I do not believe that the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue were any where forbidden. In Spain we had such Bibles when Moors and Jews lived amidst the Christians. After the expulsion of the latter from Spain, some were found to instruct their children in the Jewish religion from our Bibles, which was the cause why they were first forbidden; but they were still always permitted in colleges and monasteries, and to persons who were above suspicion \*." Here then, you say, control and prohibition are acknowledged. Undoubtedly; but observe the fact, that from the very beginning, an uncontrolled reading of the Holy Scriptures, such as Protestants recommend, without regard for the living authority of the pastors of each locality, was never practised by any Christians who had not openly apostatized. St. Ambrose calls the Bible "Librum Sacerdotalem," for the reason that it is by pastors that it must be dispensed. St. Augustin, on deciding to embrace the Catholic religion, consulted the Bishop St. Ambrose as to what books of the Holy Scripture he ought to read in preference; when the Bishop ordered him to read the Prophet Isaias,—"at ille jussit (to cite his own words) Esaiam prophetam +." Why this state of things should be, a moment's reflection ought to explain. Trithemius, in reply to the fourth question of the Emperor Maximilian, touching the obscurity of Scripture, says that "men affected with pride and vice of any kind, can never understand it; and that unless men believe. they cannot understand it. Let no learned man," he continues, "hope to understand the Scriptures unless he lay aside the veil of pride and inordinate desire; for secular learning ministers not much to the illumination of true wisdom. If the Scriptures be read with another spirit from that in which they were written, the mind cannot comprehend them; but to those who love God above all things, and who are humbly submissive to His voice, the Scriptures are sufficiently plain. The obscurities of Scripture are needful, as they direct men to the Church to receive the rule of faith and the true interpretation from her. St. Augustin says, "that he believes the Gospel, because the authority of the Church compels him to do so; but if all things in the Scripture were clear, the authority of the Church would not seem so necessary, and the merit of obedience would be evacuated 1."

The Church, therefore, evinces caution in regard to the use

<sup>\*</sup> Le Cathol, et le Protest, compar. ch. 37.

<sup>+</sup> Confess. ix. 5.

<sup>±</sup> Trithem. Lib. Octo Quæst. ad Max. Cæs.

of the Bible by her children; and, in consequence of the increased dangers of later times, has in many places employed her authority in restricting it to those whose age and condition furnished a sufficient pledge of their not abusing the study. This control, of course, was deemed sufficient proof of guilt at the beginning of the outbreak in the sixteenth century; though it is clear, that those who attacked it, while wishing to turn the Church to ridicule, were often wounded by their own arrows; for, assuredly, it is not the Catholic discipline that appears ridiculous, when the author of the interlude entitled "New Custom" represents persons of the old religion complaining that the Bible was put into the hands of young boys, to be interpreted by themselves, and then adding this advice respecting them, which, after all, perhaps, is not more merry than wise—

"Give them that whiche is meete for them, a racket and a ball, Or some other trifle to busic thier heades with all. Playinge at coytes or nine hooles, or shooting at buttes, There let them be a goddes name, till their heartes ake, and their guttes."

But we must not suppose, from such observations, that there is accuracy in the statements of the Protestants respecting the Church withholding the Bible from the laity, or any justice in their interminable accusations.

It is one of the paradoxes that characterize writers of the modern school, to pretend that men should separate in thought the Catholic Church and the Holy Scriptures; while the evidence stares them in the face, that neither can be taken, whole and uninjured, from the other. The Scriptures, without note or comment, are presented to the nations, mutilated, translated falsely in certain instances, for the specific purpose of supporting certain opinions, published like any other book, stript of their authority, and liable to a continued progress of depreciation, as a recent author pointed out to the sectaries whom he was leaving, saying to them, "You do not honour tradition, which must, in the end, lead to a dishonouring of Scripture." The Catholic Church, it is true, warns men from the use of mutilated Bibles, from a translation that has been made under the influence of unauthorized opinions, and from a rash, private interpretation of the sacred text, saying, "Let the reader beware how he makes the Scripture bend to his sense, instead of making his sense bend to Scripture \*." The Catholic Church condemns, absolutely, all translations, however eloquent, however purely English, that are designedly perverted, all copies of the Bible in which parts are systematically omitted, and rigorously prohibits their use; but how could she do other-

<sup>\*</sup> Regula cujusdam Patris ap. Luc. Hols. Cod. Reg.

wise? If the Protestants send out copies that belong to this category, being, by the choice of terms, designed to fall in with the translator's views, they have to blame themselves for the results: which in no manner indicate any want of veneration for the Bible in the Catholic Church. Men hostile to her, acknowledge "the gross perversions, omissions, and errors wrought in the holy text in the ages of printing, of deep scholars, and of critical acumen. Five or six thousand of these gross blunders or wilful mutilations, proclaim," they say, "the unpleasant fact of the sacred pages having been corrupted by the revisings of sectarian minds;" and they call on their readers, in conclusion, "to consider how different was the fate of the text when transmitted by the monkish pens \*." It is a Protestant who says all The Catholic Church has sanctioned translations of the Scriptures into the modern languages, and caused them to be made with scrupulous attention to the fidelity of the text, as far as philological studies permitted. Before Luther's time, they had been translated into the languages of Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and Holland. It was, if we may use the expression, the most Catholic men, monks, or lovers of monks, who devoted themselves to this labour. Alcuin, it is believed, assisted Rabin Maur and Walafried Strabo, in translating the Bible into German. We read also, that, "Louis-le-Debonnaire, finding that those of his subjects who spoke the Teutonic, were unable to read the Bible, commanded a celebrated poet to make a version of it in that language, containing an abridgment of the whole of the Sacred Scriptures +." It was Eckhard, minimus of St. Gall, who translated into German the Psalter of David, which the Empress St. Cunegonde used ‡. That the Bible was in every library, we have proof continually occurring; thus, to observe an instance by means of the inventory of the movable and immovable goods of the Countess Mahant d'Artois, pillaged by the army of her nephew in 1313, we find that there was a copy of it in her Castle of Hesdin, of which, with the aid of this curious document, we can survey the interior as if we actually entered the apartments. In this feudal manor, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, in which the reliquaries and images of the Blessed Virgin, in silver, in ivory, in alabaster, are of such magnificence, that one cross, around which they are grouped, is estimated at 36,000 francs; and one reliquary at 27,000 francs, of present French money, we find, on entering the library, the lives of saints, the romance of Renard, of Oger le Danois, of Tristan, and of the Violet, the Custom of Normandy, the

+ Du Chesne, t. ii. p. 326.

<sup>\*</sup> Merryweather, Bibliomania in the Middle Ages, 37.

<sup>#</sup> Bucelinus, Chronolog. Constant.

travels of Marco-Polo, and the Bible in French—La Bible en rommans, laquele Madame a recouvrée. "This Bible," says Le Roux de Lincy, "was the translation of Guyart des Moulins, of which copies were widely spread in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries \*"

But such details need not detain us now. It is sufficient to observe, that in all ages the Catholic Church has seen her children, according to her desire, familiar with the contents of the Sacred Scriptures. Where do we not find proofs of that desire? What maiden is not familiar with Rebecca? What youth with David? "In the Holy Scriptures," says St. Isidore, "as on lofty mountains, perfect men have sublime things of the intelligence, by which they can ascend, as by steps, to the height of contemplation; and simple men, like small animals, find moderate things to which they may fly in their humility. The Holy Scriptures, to suit the intelligence of each reader, changes, like the manna, which had a particular taste for each palate; so the words are adapted to each capacity; and while it is different for the understanding of different persons, it yet remains one in itself†." St. Cæsarius of Arles shows how even "persons who cannot read ought to be conversant with the Scriptures, by means of hearing others read them ‡." St. Gertrude says, that "men should daily study to recite some edifying words of Holy Scripture; which practice would be like quenching the thirst of Christ with sweetest refreshment \( \dagger^\* \)."

As we have frequently observed on other roads, the minds of the people were familiarized with the histories and lessons of the Bible, by the mere labour of painters, as may be inferred from the stained windows of churches, from the imagery on walls, and from the general application of art to effect that object; as in the colossal work by Benozzo Gozzoli on the Campo Santo at Pisa, representing the history of the Old Testament from Noah to Solomon. At the present day, a Catholic population in reality knows more about the contents of the Bible than any other. The assertions of some English travellers, who would conceal this fact, are not to be depended upon. Often, indeed, these writers contradict themselves; as when one famous, and, in some respects, agreeable tourist declares that "a few months previous to his visit, the very existence of the Gospel was almost unknown in Spain;" while he says in the next page, that "the Spaniards call the Bible a monkish book." Repeatedly, too, he leaves his reader to infer that a love and respect for the Bible belonged to men of all classes. Many of the

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<sup>\*</sup> Bib. de l'École des Chartes, tom. iii. 63.

<sup>+</sup> De Summo Bono, lib. i. c. 18.

<sup>§</sup> Vit. S. Gert. lib. iv. c. 15.

persons to whom he addressed himself seem not to have contemplated the possibility of the Holy Scriptures being presented by any but a Catholic hand. "Six hundred copies of the Gospels," he says, "were sold in the streets and allevs of Madrid; others were given to muleteers, carmen, and contrabandistas." Would the same class of men in England, without being more familiar with the Bible, have thanked him for such gifts? The Count Ofalia, hearing its professed object to give a faithful copy, said to him, "what a pity that this is a Protestant society, and that all its members are not Catholics." But there is one anecdote he relates which ought to be cited, in order to show with what pleasure some simple-hearted Catholics of Spain regarded the reading of the Bible in what they believed to be a faithful and complete form. "I was seated," he says, "one night in the ancient town of Oviedo, in a very large, scantily furnished, and remote room in an ancient posada; formerly a palace of the Counts of Santa Cruz. It was past ten, and the rain was descending in torrents. I was writing, but suddenly ceased on hearing numerous footsteps ascending the The door was creaking stairs which led to my apartment. flung open, and in walked nine men of tall stature; they were all muffled in the long cloaks of Spain; but I instantly knew by their demeanour that they were cabelleros, or gentlemen. They placed themselves in a rank before the table where I was sitting. Suddenly and simultaneously they all flung back their cloaks, and I perceived that every one bore a book in his After a pause, which I was unable to break, for I sat lost in astonishment, and almost conceived myself to be visited by apparitions, they explained to me the cause of their visit, which was a wish to 'thank me for having brought those books to the Asturias, and to request that they might have the Old Testament also.' After half an hour's conversation, they suddenly said in the English language, 'Good night, sir,' wrapped their cloaks around them, and walked out as they had come." But there is one fact which this traveller might have observed, and which, it appears from some of his own really interesting episodes, he did actually witness, that ought to have suggested very different inferences from what he drew respecting the greater or less diffusion of the books of Scripture in the places which he visited; for we are told, and indeed we may ourselves observe, that a Catholic of devout life is, more or less, a living Gospel, in which may be read the character of the Christian religion. Now, assuredly he must have found many of these Bibles in Spain. In fact, he repeatedly speaks of meeting with them; describing without recognizing what they were.

"What is a saint? What is a Catholic who seeks to save his soul," demands St. Thomas of Villanova, "but a living Gospel? For what do you read in the Gospel that you do not see in the saint? In him, simplicity, purity, sanctity, humility, charity, piety, meekness, justice, benignity are seen, as it were, beautifully painted; so that what a rude rustic could not read in a book, he sees in the saint intelligibly plain\*." St. Anthony of Padua remarks, that "the Church in her offices makes allusion to this identity, for in repeating 'Ecce sacerdos magnus,' and what follows, she ascribes to her confessor the praises bestowed on seven of the patriarchs; for the first words are taken from the praise of Simon, son of Onia†." "Qui in diebus suis placuit Deo," is said of Enoch. "Inventus est justus et in tempore iracundiæ," are said of Noah. "Non est inventus similis illi," is said of Abraham. "Benedictionem omnium gentium," of Isaac. "Magnificavit eum in conspectu

regum," of Moses; and "statuit eum," of Aaron 1.

The lives of holy Catholics are studied copies, we might say, fac-similes, like those formed by the litho-typographic process of the Sacred Scriptures. Faricius, in his life of St. Aldhelm, says, that "he sought to imitate the most just fathers of the Old Testament-Abraham, in the reverential practice of hospitality, and in the perseverance of obedience, Jeremiah in the austerity of solitude, and the laudable sequestration of himself from the sight of men, Job, in the fervour of patience, knowing that all virtue is helpless which a brave patience does not strengthen, David, in the ardour of charity \( \int \)." Now, all this our modern traveller might have seen verified in that very Spain, where he asserts the Gospel was almost unknown. "In all art," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "it is necessary to have rules, and also practice. Without practice, no one will be a painter. Moreover, he must study the rules, and have models of his art. Now the art of arts is to serve God; and for this you must study the rules and precepts in the Gospel, and the models in the lives of the saints; for a saint is nothing else but a living Gospel | ."

So in his sermon on St. Augustin, showing that there was no part of the temple of God which that great doctor did not measure with the line of Scripture in his hand, applying it to the gates, the vestibule, the windows, porches, and courts from top to bottom, leaving nothing unmeasured, he says generally of all Catholic guides, "These were the men who went round the temple with the line and plummet of Scripture in their hands, to see whether all the living stones were in their right

+ Eccl. 50.

<sup>\*</sup> De S. Nicolao Serm.

<sup>‡</sup> S. Ant. de Padua, Serm. de Confessoribus.

<sup>§</sup> Vita Aldhelmi, Faricio Auctore. || Dom. 2 Quad. Concio ii.

places. The loose stones without the edifice were not measured, for men without faith cannot be ruled by Scripture; but every stone by baptism placed in the Church, that is, every Christian, when measured by this line, if he should deviate from faith, can by argument, as it were, by the stroke of a trowel, be brought back to the right line, if he be not pertinacious. The line, therefore, is the Holy Scripture. By this all other writings of men are to be measured, and whatever is contrary to it must be false \*"

Another avenue to the centre from this road is formed by the interpreters and expositors of the Holy Scripture, who all, either directly or indirectly, point to the Catholic Church, from which they came, or to the labours of which they are obliged to refer, in some way, every one who studies the sacred text. Here, it is true, obstructions have been designedly placed; for the Protestants act towards the biblical scholars of Catholicity like the Dutch merchants of foreign wood, who endeavoured to conceal the country where they found it growing, in order that those who sought the most precious kinds might be obliged to apply to them for what they wanted; for as certain trees common in Guiana were called, with a view to such interests, China-wood by the Dutch, so the results of Catholic learning in regard to the sacred text, are often given as the work of Protestant commentators. But the mere names of Cornelius à Lapide, Estius, Calmet, N. Alexander, Maldonatus, Menochius, Pequigny, and Piernio, would be enough to satisfy any reasonable mind of the successful and unrivalled labours of the Catholic Church in interpreting what the Council of Trent calls "coelestis ille sacrorum librorum thesaurus." "In all writing," says a celebrated German author, "the real point is the ground, the interior, the sense of the work; here lies the original, the Divine, the effective, the intact, the indestructible. So here the language, dialect, peculiarity, style, and writing are the body, which is exposed to deterioration, and may be insufficient on account of the difference of time and place, and the diversity of human capacities and modes of thought."

The Catholic Church possesses more than a dead letter in the Holy Scriptures, or a silent writing that may be misinterpreted and misapplied. She combines with the sacred text a living and audible expositor, an immortal tradition, a Divine authority, which secures from error all who, under her influence, apply to the study of the Bible; and however valuable she may esteem, strongly recommend, and profoundly cultivate, philology in regard to biblical studies, it will never be true to say of one of her children what an accomplished scholar has affirmed

of the Protestant Divine, that "he must regard his system of Divinity as merely a branch, or application of philological science \*."

In general, the Church applies to the interpretation of Scripture those fundamental rules which hold in jurisprudence, and the neglect of which is characteristic of all doctrinal opposition to her authority. Thus the canonist says with the theologian, "Verba clara non admittunt interpretationem, neque voluntatis conjecturam." The latter says, with the text of the Pandects, "Si de interpretatione legis quæratur, in primis inspiciendum est, quo jure civitas, retro in hujusmodi casibus usa fuisset; optima enim est legum interpres consuetudo." The legal maxim, "stare decisis," and the profound observation of Savigny, that "to understand any system of law, you must look at it in the same point of view in which it was regarded by those who made it," are found no less applicable in the Church than in the courts; while, in general, the rules of Catholic Scriptural interpretation resemble those which men of legal minds employ in the construction of statutes t.

Again, the views of Catholic expositors pierce far beyond what the mere letter of the sacred text conveys; and thereby do they recommend their biblical studies to those men of science who, when left with only Protestant interpretations, find contradictions and difficulties that they deem insurmountable. "Non me capio pree letitia," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "quoties sacrarum literarum inter se et cum ratione tantam consonantiam

intueor t."

But then the object of the Scriptures is to express religious and moral truth, by means of apt images; not to convey a knowledge of geology, or astronomy, or any other branch of natural science; and even, in regard to religion, their end is to instruct man in his duties, not to feed his curiosity. Therefore these Catholic expositors are prepared for finding things ineffable only sketched, as it were, with light touches. "Accordingly," brother Giles used to say, "all things that can be thought, related, seen, or touched, are nothing in comparison of what cannot be thought, seen, or touched.—Tota sacra Scriptura loquitur nobis quasi balbutiendo; sicut mater balbutit cum filio suo parvo, qui aliter non posset verba intelligere §."

The interpretations, again, of the Catholic authority, are moral, and consonant with the purest and noblest ideas of the

<sup>\*</sup> Donaldson, The New Cratylus, 18.

<sup>†</sup> M. Bowyer, Readings before the Mid. Temple.

<sup>‡</sup> In Die Nat. Dom. Serm. v.

<sup>§</sup> Bucchius, Liber Aureus Conformitatum Vitæ B. Pat. Francisci ad Vitam J. Christi, 68.

Divine goodness. To each of these expositors may be addressed the poet's words,—

"Tu parlerais ainsi dans des livres austères, Comme parlaient jadis les anciens solitaires, Comme parlent tous ceux devant qui l'on se tait, Et l'on te écouterait comme on les écoutait."

Here are no pure anthropomorphisms, ascribing human passions to God,—no sanguinary invitations; no inhuman proposals, arising from a false interpretation, and a total misapprehension of the Bible, as when the followers of Luther and Calvin made it a

stalking horse for rebellion and persecution.

Thomassinus cites instances to show how differently the sacred text is explained when the holy Fathers of the Church are heard. "The intention of all just men's prayer in the Holy Scriptures," says St. Gregory of Nyssen, "was the extermination of sin. For the Psalmist, when he said 'Tollantur peccatores et iniqui de terra, ut non sint;' prays that sin may be taken away; so also when he prays for confusion to his enemies, he shows to you the spiritual foes which attack human life, of whom St. Paul also speaks; and this is nothing else than that the man may be preserved \*." So Cassian, explaining the Psalmist's words respecting his enemies, says, "he speaks either affirmatively, not deprecatively, of the enemies of Christ, or he speaks of demons, or else of his sins; or he prays that enemies may perish, and the men remain. Take away malice from your brother, and he will no more persecute you. Destroy him thus, by your winning charity." In the same manner also speaks St. Thomas of Villanova t.

Above all, one must remark the charity which Catholic expositors display before us, tracing its bright form in every page of the Holy Scriptures, which are so explained to the people, that all after hearing them concur in teaching it; as in

the lines of old Rutebeuf,-

"Encor raconte li escriz Que charitez e' est Jhésu-criz, Por ce dient maintes et maint Que cil qui en charité maint Il maint en Dieu et Dieu en lui."

"Charity from a pure heart," says Thomassin, "having two precepts,—the love of God, and the love of man, must be the end of the whole canonical office;" for "in no part of the

<sup>\*</sup> Orat. i. de Oratione.

<sup>+</sup> In Fer. 6, ante 1 Dom. Quad.

Scriptures," says St. Augustin, "should you seek any thing else. In whatever is obscure in the Scriptures, this lies hidden. In whatever is plain in Scripture, this is manifest. If never manifest, it would not nourish you. If never obscure, it would not exercise you \*."

As for controversy on the Scriptures, from which Catholicism alone delivers you, hear what St. Augustin says, "Nolo verbis contendere; ad nihil enim utile est, nisi ad subversionem audientium. Ad ædificationem autem bona est lex, quia finis ejus est charitas de corde puro, et conscientia recta, et fide non ficta. Et novit Magister noster in quibus duolus præceptis totam

legem prophetasque suspenderit +."

"The most horrible effect of the judgment of God," says St. Cæsarius of Arles, "is a spiritual famine of the Divine word." Within the Catholic Church, by well-ordered study of the Bible, by learned commentaries, by accurate or at least faithful versions, by sermons, conferences, pastorals, and familiar discourses, by catechisms of perseverance, sacred histories, and epitomies, the supernatural food of souls is regularly and abundantly, with order and fidelity, and in the most natural way possible, dispensed. "The use and science of dialectics and philosophy would not be allowed to us," says a Franciscan, "unless that the sacred page of Scripture may be better learned and taught I."

Aided from above, and wanting no subsidiary help from learning, these Catholic expositors show from the Bible the whole scheme of the Divine wisdom, in the work of human redemption and sanctification in the Catholic Church. They show that deliverance by the death of Christ forms the key to unlock all its mysteries; that as the Jews were to meditate on the law for the secret sense and the predictions of the Saviour, the letter and the ceremonial precepts, as Peter of Blois says, "having never been intended to vivify the soul, and give true wisdom §," so Christians should discern, in all parts of the sacred volume. the same great doctrine, without which nothing in the Catholic Church would be intelligible. St. Odo cites the instance furnished by the words of Job, "Cur non tollis peccatum meum, et quare non aufers iniquitatem meam?" and remarks that "they are to be understood as expressing the desire of a Saviour | . They show, with Henry Suso, that " to study the

<sup>\*</sup> In Ps. 140, ap. Thomass. de l'Offic. Div. et de sa Liaison, &c.

<sup>†</sup> Confess. xii. 18.

<sup>#</sup> Bucchius, Liber Aureus Conform., &c., 165.

<sup>§</sup> Pet. Bles. Cont. Perfid. Judæor.

Mor. in Job, lib. viii.

sacred humanity of Christ is the most compendious way to eternal beatitude; that the sacred humanity of Christ is the road, and His passion the door, by which men can pass to the true felicity \*." They show how reasonable and conformable to what is read in Scripture are all the pious opinions respecting it entertained in the Church, as when Rupertus says, "what more agreeable to the evangelic faith, than to believe that our Lord appeared after His resurrection to His mother, whose soul had been pierced with a sword during His passion, though the Evangelists do not say when or where He appeared to her, while it cannot be supposed that He did not appear to her †?" This rational, profound, and reverential interpretation of Scripture by Catholicism, supplies, therefore, an avenue to the Church, which nourishes and transmits it; and it might be thought that no man of good sense, and of religious mind, could pass it by unmoved.

In fine, we come to the avenue effected by the contents of the Sacred Scriptures themselves, which in almost every page reveal the Church, and proclaim her gracious mission. a double chastisement," says the Count de Maistre, "when men are condemned to see in the Holy Scriptures what is not there, and not to see in them what they most clearly contain \(\frac{1}{2}\)." The blindness of those who cannot see the Catholic Church in the Bible, though one may be resolved never to blame others, must be traced to the will, at least as much as to the judgment, however weak may be its powers, and however tangled the chain of circumstances which enslave it. The Church is there spoken of in clearer language than any thing else; even than the first elements of faith, the Trinity, which some Protestants profess to believe. "Moreover, as the Gospel," to use the expression of Rupert, "is the head of every day's office in the Church, and as the other parts of it, as members of the body to the head, are adapted and conjoined §," it may be said justly, that the Sacred Scriptures lead men not only to the Church metaphysically, but positively and practically, within the very material Church, and enable them, with the clearest intelligence, to assist at the celebration of her mysteries, the ritual itself, according to which these are conducted, having its types and originals in the Bible; for who does not perceive that the Catholic rites and ceremonies, the vestments and the fixed enactments which determine every thing, are admirably designed to answer the very object which must have been in the Divine view, when the children of Israel were enjoined to use certain distinctions of raiment and colour, for the reason expressed, "that when they

<sup>\*</sup> Dialog. 1 and 2.

<sup>#</sup> Lettres, &c. ii. 376.

<sup>+</sup> De Div. Officiis, lib. vii. 25.

<sup>§</sup> De Divinis Officiis, lib. viii. 7.

shall see them they may remember all the commandments of the Lord, and not follow their own thoughts and eyes, going astray after divers things, but rather being mindful of the precepts of the Lord, may do them, and be holy to their God \*?" It is only a profound spiritual agreement with the Sacred Scriptures that can explain the Catholic offices and festivals, and their relative importance; as when the votive mass De Beata Maria, in time of advent, solemnly sung on the 18th of December, to commemorate the incarnation, by an observance transferred from the month of March, for the same reason that caused the festival of Corpus Christi to be instituted notwithstanding its previous celebration in holy week, was called Missa Aurea, to denote the pre-eminence of that mystery. Similarly Pentecost, having no octave day, but the whole of Whitsun week being the octave of Easter, which is celebrated, not during eight days, but during eight weeks, the paschal time only ending after nones, on the Saturday after Pentecost, directs the mind to the doctrine of the resurrection, as qualified by St. Paul when he said, "that if Christ were not risen, our faith would be in vain." The daily repetition of the beginning of the Gospel of St. John, and the mysterious effects ascribed by all Christian antiquity to its repetition, signify the profound acceptance by the Church of all the mysteries contained in the Holy Scriptures, that chapter being a compendium of them all, as the holy Trinity, the creation of the world, and the incarnation of Christ +.

"While our Lord," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "expounded the Scriptures to the sorrowing disciples, their hearts, we read, burned within them. This lasted the whole way, so that they did not feel the length of the road. O, if we had heard that long conversation by the way! What a blessed pilgrimage was their's ‡!" Gently led by those whom Jesus Christ has sent to continue, age after age, that Divine homily, the reader of the Bible beholds in its sacred pages the whole magnificent history and glorious destiny of the Catholic Church, existing from the first; or, as Balduine says, "before and after the law \( \)."

"Our religion," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "is from the beginning of the world. A great Christian was Abraham; a great Christian Moses; so also David and all the patriarchs. They adored the same God, believed the same mysteries, and expected the same resurrection and judgment. They had the same precepts, manners, affections, desires, thoughts, and modes of life; so that if you saw Abraham, and Moses, and David,

<sup>\*</sup> Numbers xv.

<sup>\*</sup> Burius, Rom. Pont. Notitia.

<sup>‡</sup> Fest. Res. Fer. 11.

<sup>§</sup> Balduinus, Ecclesia ante Legem et post Legem.

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with Peter, and Andrew, and Augustin, and Jerome, you would observe, in all essential things, a perfect identity \*."

Every thing that now seems most distinctively characteristic of Catholics, is seen in the Bible, either delivered as a precept, praised as a virtue, or practised as a logical inference, drawn into action by the just. Catholic manners, down to the minutest detail, are biblical manners; not the manners, perhaps, of those who talk most about the Bible, but those of men who, retaining the sentiments of the old humanity, unconsciously imitate the examples contained in the Bible.

When we read that from the eastern shore to that of the sea. shall spread the fields that you will reserve for the holy firstfruits, and that the sanctuary of the Lord shall be in the midst of them †; that there shall be the path and the road, which shall be called the Holy Way, and that those who have been redeemed by the Lord, turning towards Sion, shall enter it with songs of praise t, is it to the budget of modern infidel States, and to the conventicles of contending sects, or to the Catholic canon law, and to the Catholic Churches, that thoughts will most naturally advert? Accordingly we find, by referring to any of the ancient charters of foundation, which were granted under the influence of faith that it is to the Bible, not to human reason independent of it, or to statutes founded on the philosophy of men, an appeal is made in confirmation of the wisdom of the views which suggested them. To cite but one instance, we read what follows in the archives of Mount Cassino, "since it is worthy, and very pleasing to God, as appears from both the ancient and the new Testament, to offer to God and to the holy Basilicas from one's property, through the hope of a blessed resurrection, so that it is indubitably believed that pardon for faults may be obtained by the right application of the transitory things of this life; therefore, firmly convinced of this, and trusting in the mercy of Almighty God, we, Gerard, with Labinea our beloved wife, resolve to give and offer such things \( \delta \)."

It is in the Bible that men can trace also the source of that great Catholic creation, the canon law, observing how "the Holy Scriptures are the basis, and as it were the type of the canons; of which, in the corpus juris canonici are extracted one hundred and four from Genesis, fifty-six from Exodus, thirty-two from Leviticus, forty-seven from Numbers, thirty-five from Deuteronomy, ten from Joshua, seven from Judges, ninety-five from Kings, eleven from Chronicles, two from Esdras, seven

<sup>\*</sup> De Nat. Virg. Mar. iii.

<sup>+</sup> Ezech. xlviii. 8.

<sup>‡</sup> Isaias xxxv. 8.

<sup>§</sup> D. Gatula, Hist. Cassinens. Sæc. vi. 259.

from Tobias, nineteen from Job, one hundred and thirty-one from the Psalms, thirty-one from Proverbs, eight from Cantica, sixteen from Ecclesiastes, twenty-one from Ecclesiasticus, fiftyfour from Isaiah, twenty-one from Jeremiah, forty-five from Ezechiel, fifteen from Daniel, twelve from Hosea, three from Joel, five from Amos, three from Jonah, two from Micah, four from Nahum, one from Habacuc, one from Zephaniah, one from Haggai, six from Zechariah, thirteen from Malachi, three from Machabees, two hundred and thirty-seven from Matthew. twenty from Mark, ninety-one from Luke, one hundred and sixty-seven from John, seventy-nine from the Acts, eighty six from Romans, one hundred and forty from 1st Corinthians, twenty-nine from 2nd Corinthians, thirty from Galatians, nineteen from Ephesians, six from Philippians, five from Colossians, five from 1st Thessalonians, three from 2nd Thessalonians, forty-six from 1st to Timothy, thirteen from 2nd to Timothy, eight from Titus, fourteen from Hebrews, eleven from James, nineteen from 1st of Peter, five from 2nd of Peter, twenty-one from John, one from Jude, and fifteen from the Apocalypse. Such are the fountains from which the Catholic Church has taken the chief rules of her government \*."

On the road of the Scriptures, again, men can see, as an eminent philologer suggests, that "as death and dispersion were the twin consequences of sin, so life and re-union are to be the conjoined results of redemption; that Christianity is not merely the harbinger of life, but that it is also the point of reconvergence for the human race, and that this is indicated by the first gifts conferred upon the ministers who were to begin the work of re-uniting mankind, namely, an intuitive knowledge of the different dialects of the world; consequently, that it is the Catholic Church effecting this re-union by a humility opposed to the pride which caused the first dispersion, that answers the implied conditions, as deducible from the Bible. On this road they can see, in fine, the Divine origin of the institutions and discipline of the Catholic Church,—of her religious orders, following the counsels of her morality conformable to the sermon on the mount, of her fasts and purifications, practised in the Church before our Lord, and which He Himself declares should be perpetuated after His removal hence.

"The whole Scriptures," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "tend to this object, viz. to move the wicked to repentance. This also we ought to do in all our sermons. This is the most useful science. We should excite such persons to reflection; cry out, show the shortness of life, and its end, that they might

<sup>\*</sup> Bowyer's Thirteenth Reading.

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There they can see the Divine origin of penance and absolution, in compliance with the letter and spirit of the Gospel, remarking, with St. Gertrude, how, "from the creation to the consummation of the whole work of human redemption, God has made more use of the wisdom of benignity, than of the power of majesty†." There they can see the Divine truth of the Eucharistic sacrifice fulfilling prophecy; of all the sacraments in general, each supported by the most plain and express texts, of all the festivals, commemorating some biblical event,

some biblical mystery.

There they can learn the cause of the prodigious contrast between Catholic and Protestant manners, between the treatment of the poor, for instance, in a Catholic and in a Protestant country; for if you seek biblical customs in this regard, it will be at the gate of the Spanish or French hospice or nobleman, or at that of the "good old English gentleman," not in the modern union, that you will be satisfied. There you can discover why the spirit of Catholicism is so opposed to some of the views of the modern civilization; why the former seems all for the next world, while creating content, and peace, and happiness in the present, whereas the latter seems all for the present, while producing discontent, and confusion, and misery, over the face of the earth.

"There are many texts in the Bible," says a distinguished author, remarking these contrasts, "which Protestants cannot understand at all. Nay, many of the precepts of our Lord Himself, cannot be understood by them. But to Catholics who know what the Catholic Church teaches and practises, all these are easy and natural. These texts of Scripture are like a locked-up treasure-box. The Protestant tries every key he has, and cannot open the lock. The Catholic comes, and puts in his key, boldly, simply, and naturally, not like a man who is trying an experiment, but like one who is doing a common action, and the lock opens at once, easily and silently. Which of the two would you say was the right owner of the treasure, the Catholic or the Protestant ??"

On the road of the Scriptures, in a word, you behold the Divine truth of the Catholic Church as distinguished from all communities that have separated themselves from her, under pretence of more closely following the Bible, and from all philo-

<sup>\*</sup> De Nativ. Virg. Mar. Con. ii.

<sup>+</sup> Insin. Div. Pietatis, &c. lib. ii. c. 18.

<sup>1</sup> H. Wilberforce's Farewell Letter to his Parishioners.

sophy at variance with her faith. The conclusion of many might be expressed in the words of the poet,—

"I strove against the stream, and all in vain! Let the great river take me to the main."

## CHAPTER III.

THE ROAD OF CONTEMPLATION.



EW men pass through life without at some period or other taking, at least unconsciously, some steps along the road that here branches off through immense trees, that seem as ancient as any that we have hitherto remarked. It is, indeed, at rare intervals, and only one by one, that common wanderers, like the stranger, are

found upon it. Some two or three at the most can be observed who may say with Dante, that "they walked during a few moments in silence and in solitude, one first, the other following

his steps, as minor friars journeying on their road \*."

At present, it is perhaps more lonely than ever; so that the stillness here of the long untrodden forest is only broken at times by the sweeping tempest through its groaning boughs. Now, then, by a secret path-way we proceed beneath the leafy solitude; and the scene and hour may recall the poet's lines.—

"It was a vast and antique wood
Thro' which they past, and the grey shades of
Evening o'er that green wilderness did fling
Still deeper solitude. Pursuing still the path
That wound the vast and knotted trees around
Thro' which slow shades were wandering, to a
Deep lawny dell they came, and a stone seat
Beside a spring
"."

It has been said by a philosopher, that "the earth being placed in the middle between the planets, our place in the solar system has been well chosen for the contemplative animal which was to inhabit it †."

<sup>\*</sup> Hell. 23.

Without, however, looking to the stars to find matter for their thoughts, the forest itself, by the time-worn objects that are occasionally met with, in its wildest parts, as also by its own venerable sires, seeming coeval with the world, appears to invite all who pass here to contemplation,—

"In lonely glens you like to stray Or where old ruined castles grey Nod to the moon."

So another poet says of himself,-

"Deep pools, tall trees, black chasms, and dizzy crags
And tottering towers—I loved to stand and read
Their looks——."

Any work of human hands standing alone in desert places, strikes one with a certain awe; and, by an involuntary impression, directs the mind to meditate on those who carved its stones, and raised them. "Consider," says St. Ephrem, appearing under the influence of this very impression, "old edifices, ancient statues, and decayed columns of brass, and think with yourself, where are those who made and possessed them \*?" Riding through the most lonely quarters of the forest of Marly, one easily falls into a contemplative mood on coming to the track of some old paved road, that seems for centuries untrodden, stretching across the flowery wastes, as a traveller elsewhere says, "like the vertebræ of an extinct mammoth." The wanderer may follow it for miles, with thoughtful heart, through a fearful solitude, where now not even a hunter can be found. Here and there trees grow out of the huge stones, showing how long it has been abandoned by man to nature, which thus, by uprooting the blocks, slowly recovers her rights, covering with plants and flowers the rents of time,-

> "Pace ye with reverend step, I pray, The moss-grown and forgotten way; While nurmurs low the fitful wind Winning to peace the meeken'd mind."

St. Gregory invites man to contemplation by the example of the goats, who love high, desert rocks †. But without climbing to meet with them, men may be naturally moved by means of the old venerable trees in the lower regions of the forest, to adapt

<sup>\*</sup> Adhortationes.

their mind and train of thoughts to the title of the present road, saying with the poet, as they gaze at some monumental trunk,—

"Yon gnarled oak, would be could tell
The changes of his parent dell,
Since he, so grey and stubborn now,
Waved in each breeze a sapling bough!"

"We cannot penetrate," says Varenne-Fenille, "within the bounds of a great forest of ancient oaks, without being moved; we leave them with regret, and return to them always with fresh

pleasure."

Pliny describes an immense plane in Lycia, in a beautiful spot near a cold fountain, in which tree there was a kind of chamber like a rocky cavern, so large that Licinius Mutianus, the consul, desired to transmit to posterity the circumstance of his having dined in it along with eighteen persons; the foliage affording them wide couches, screened from every breath of wind. He said that "he was more pleased on hearing from it the sound of the rain pattering upon the leaves, than if he had been seated in a marble hall, with painted walls, and a golden ceiling \*."

"There was an oak at Keicot, under the shade of which four thousand three hundred and seventy-four men had room to stand," as Plott declares. Damory's oak, in Dorsetshire, was sixty-eight feet in circumference; and the cavity within it was sixteen feet long and twenty feet high. About the time of the Commonwealth, an old man used it for the entertainment of travellers; but the dreadful tempest, in the third year of the last century, shattered this majestic tree. The Shire oak, which stretches its branches into the three counties of York, Nottingham, and Derby, covers nearly seven hundred and seven square yards. Fitting company for men contemplative are still the Cowthorpe oak, near Wetherby; the Baddington oak, in the vale of Gloucester; Wallace's oak, in Torwood; and the Smuggler's oak, in Lord Digby's woods of Sherborne. When the knights of the Teutonic order first came into Prussia, they found an oak, in a forest, of gigantic dimensions, which they took by force and fortified like a castle; and Henneberger mentions, that there was an oak at Oppen, near Kænigsberg, so vast in circumference, that one could ride a horse, describing a circle, within the hollow of its trunk †." The chequer elm, still standing, though reduced to a shell, was planted in the days of King Stephen, contemporary in its origin with the heroic struggles

<sup>\*</sup> N. Hist, lib. xii. 5.

of Queen Matilda with the Empress Maude, while her husband remained a prisoner in the dark holds of Bristol Castle. The willow, called the abbot's tree, at St. Edmundsbury, is supposed to have beheld that far-famed and ancient monastery when in the zenith of its greatness. Nor is it by such patriarch's alone that the forest itself seems to invite us to contemplation. There is not an acorn that falls which might not suggest it. Hogarth, writing to his friend Ellis, says, "How poor and bungling are all the imitations of art, compared to what we find on the ground! These seed cups, or vases, are an instance. When I see you next, we will sit down, nay, kneel down, if you will, and admire these things." Moreover, the numerical laws of the families of plants, by conducting us into the mysterious obscurity which envelopes all that is connected with their creation, -and, in general, that impenetrable veil which conceals from our eyes all that relates to the first creation of trees and plants,-dispose even the wanderer whom scientific thoughts most influence to contemplation. At all events, the whole aspect of a deep wood, and the silence that reigns within it, suffice to change the current of men's thoughts, and suggest a reply when sophists would contradict faith, like that in Shakspeare, "you have said; but, whether wisely or no, let the forest judge." I know not whether this observation may not be received as accounting for the esteem with which forests were regarded in ages more disposed to contemplation than these latter times, when they are so little prized. "There is no treasure in the world," says Bernard Palissy, "so precious, nor which ought to be in such esteem, as the smallest nook occupied by trees and plants, though the most despised. I regard them more than mines of gold and silver; and when I consider the value of the least tree or bush, I am astonished at the ignorance of men, who seem at present only to study how to break, cut, and destroy the beautiful forests which their predecessors preserved with so much care \*." But it is with trees as with men; certain epochs are more or less favourable to both. However, let some places be ever so fitting for contemplation, it is certain that the depths of this pass, now so secret, have never been familiar to the crowd of men. "There are few," says St. John Climachus, "who attain to the highest erudition, even in secular philosophy; but, I say, there are still fewer who know God according to the true wisdom of rest and quiet †." Joachim de Flores, at the foot of Etna, in the year 1200, fasting and watching for three days and nights, dictated, and he was pale as the leaf of the forest. His disciple wrote down his words: "There are three ages, three sorts of persons among believers; the first called to the work

<sup>\*</sup> Œuvres de Palissy, 64.

of accomplishing the law; the second, to the labour of the passion; the last, elected for the liberty of contemplation." Nevertheless, these three classes have been from the beginning.—Sic volo eum manere donec veniam, tu me sequere, said our Lord, and St. Augustin remarks, "that here were signified the two ways—the active, by Peter; the contemplative, by John.-It may be, indeed, but a few who take what St. Bonaventura calls "the third journey of eternity;" namely, that limpid contemplation of eternal things, by which the human spirit comes to the intrinsic and eternal manor of Jesus; but there are still fewer who remain in absolute ignorance of the impressions belonging to the first stages at least of the road of contemplation; who are conscious of no act but that of hand, insensible to the still and mental parts that do contrive. Some in youth, silently enthusiastic, loving nature, and "poets in every thing but words," had learned to meditate, who, as they advanced, forsook the path, and lost that sweet. A light traveller has sometimes experience that might be related to describe their fate. "In the morning," says one, "we obtained a dim and distant view of an immense range of mountains, which are those that bound Castile on the north. The day, however, became dim and obscure, and we speedily lost sight of them. A hollow sound now arose, and blew over these desolate plains with violence." Others discover this road only in the evening of their days. One of these was Father Arnaud Ponce, of the convent of Puch, near Valencia, who, towards the end of his life, wrote a treatise of meditations, on the words of the twentyfourth chapter of Genesis, that Isaac went out into the fields in the evening to meditate." He, being greatly moved by these words, used often to repeat them; and, when asked, why they occurred to him so frequently, he used to say, that they exhibited his own state, who had been converted to the results of contemplation late, and, as it were, in the evening of his life\*.

This road, then, presents itself more or less to all men. There is no one who does not find himself at moments straying, in thoughtful mood, along it. The frail, the sensual, the poor victims of a mistaken love of pleasure—even the very worst of human kind—know what contemplation is; for, say they, if you

will hear the poet representing them-

"Dreams of ruin
Make us keep silence—thus—and thus—
Though silence is a grief to us."

"I know very well," says Father Boullanger, the Capuchin,

\* Hist. de l'Ord. de la Mercy, 164.

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"that one is no sooner in a crowd, or in the great world, than a sadness steals over the mind, and the heart desires retreat; and this is common to all men, to sinners as well as to saints\*." If you will hear poets, the Georgian Sultana used to recur to the meditative habits of her first youth—

"Yet, midst the blaze of courts, she fixed her love On the cool fountain, or the shady grove; Still, with the shepherd's innocence, her mind To the sweet vale and flow'ry-mead inclined: And oft, as Spring renew'd the plains with flow'rs, Breath'd his soft gales, and led the fragrant hours; With sure return, she sought the sylvan scene, The breezy mountains, and the forest's green."

Woodmen's songs supply a more familiar example; for we read:

"The morning dawn'd on the oaks in the glades of Sherwood forest.

How beautiful and sweet is the fragrance of the wild briar! Robin

Hood, altho' an outlaw, was often reflective, and when in a pensive

mood,

Would think of his boyhood's days, the old house, and the old tree."

"Leave me, boy, to my meditations," says the Bravo to his servant, in the Antiquary. Thus, all varieties of character meet us occasionally beneath these boughs. Our object, accordingly, must be, as usual, to mark the issues from this road to Catholicity, and to read, as it were, the sign-posts placed along it, which point to the centre in the Church.

The first opening which contemplation yields, is effected by a general natural impression of the mysterious character of life's journey, and a sense of its fearful brevity; "for, behold, short years pass away, and I am walking in a path by which I shall not

return † :"

"Stop and consider! life is but a day;
A fragile dew-drop on its perilous way
From a tree's summit ———‡."

Man, when thoughtful, feels gratitude for what he has enjoyed, saying, in the words of the sacred page, "I have seen many things by travelling, and many customs of things. Sometimes I have been in danger of death for these things, and I have been delivered, by the grace of  $\operatorname{God} \S$ ." Oh, what sweet retrospects can the days of youth supply! Those evening walks through the rocks and thorn-bushes, with friends of one's choice, as upon Clifton Downs, where bramble thickets and wild woods surpass

<sup>\*</sup> Les Dix Solitudes, 33.

<sup>#</sup> Keats.

<sup>+</sup> Job xvi.

<sup>§</sup> Ecclesiastic. xxxiv.

in charm all that parks and private gardens yield, can still, by memory, warm the heart, and diffuse a light of cheerfulness and love on all things.

"There would she oft delighted rove
The flower-enamell'd rocks along,
Or wander with me through the grove,
And listen to the woodlark's song.
Or 'mid the forest's awful gloom,
Whilst love and pity fill'd my eyes,
Recall past ages from the tomb,
And bid ideal worlds arise."

But, as the past, however illuminated with the colours of a golden fancy, will not suffice to content him, he grows sensible, that he must aspire to something happier and more durable than what he has hitherto obtained, while time is evidently about tof ail him. The Protestant poet Marvel expresses the vague apprehensions of this state, saying—

"But at my back I always hear Time's winged chariot hurrying near; And yonder all before us lie Deserts of vast eternity,"

Then, with another poet, he, who is involved in such perplexity, exclaims, remonstrating with time—

"I ask not happy years; nor memories
Of tranquil childhood, nor home-shelter'd love;
Though all these thou hast torn from me, and more."

What he desires is something that will not thus fail him; something beyond which there will not be that hereafter the prospect of which makes the heart so sorrowful, that the old poet, alluding to but one of its effects, demands—

"Canst thou think of hereafter? Poor Cleantha, Hereafter is that time th' art bound to pray Against: Hereafter is that enemy That, without mercy, will destroy thy face; And what's a lady, then?"

But how is he to obtain that good which will never be past? The world says to him, like Apollo to Phaëton—

"Sors tua mortalis; non est mortale quod optas."

Alone Catholicity reconciles his wishes with his destiny, and enables him to escape from the region of remorse and death, to

that land where he may have life and love for eternity. "There are only two true things," says Chateaubriand, "religion with intelligence, and love with youth—that is to say, the future and the present: the rest is nothing worth." The present passes as we name it. It passes with the breeze which ruddies the cheek—

"Youth—the vision of a morn,
That flees the coming day;
It is the blossom of a thorn
Which rude winds sweep away."

Religion alone remains. Let her clothe with new beauty the former scenes familiar to you; and oh! then, perhaps,

"She there shall dress a sweeter sod Than Fancy's feet have ever trod."

"Alas!" cries Petrarch, "I know well with what rapidity the world abandons us, and hastes to reject our memory. I know how days and hours bear away our years. When I considered the flight of time, I was filled with terror. Then, at the wondrous spectacle f its velocity, I began to despise the life below much more than I had before esteemed it; and I regarded it as an inconceivable vanity to fix one's heart on things subjected to time, and which no longer exist, while one is the most strongly attached to them. Passengers are your triumphs and your pomps, passengers your dignities, passengers your kingdoms; all that is most must pass away with time." These thoughts, as far as they are melancholy, were not less familiar to the heathens, as Horace and Ovid can bear witness, in lines which still men are fond of repeating often:—

"Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas Omnia destruitis, vitiataque dentibus ævi Paulatim lentâ consumitis omnia morte\*."

"Fountains," he continues, "rivers, fields, cities, are changed by time. If you inquire for such and such cities, you will be told that they are under water: for such and such ports, they are now far from the sea.

— "Sic tempora verti
Cernimus atque illas assumere robora gentes
Coneidere has; sic magna fuit censuque virisque
Perque decem potuit tantum dare sanguinis annos;
Nunc humilis, veteres tantummodo Troja ruinas
Et pro divitiis tumulos ostendit avorum.

Clara fuit Sparte, magnæ viguere Mycenæ; Nec non Cecropiæ, nec non Amphionis arces; Vile solum Sparte est, altæ cecidere Mycenæ; Œdipodioniæ quid sunt, nisi fabula, Thebæ? Quid Pandioniæ nunc sunt nisi nomen Athenæ\*?"

The English poet has left lines more impressive perhaps-

"Time's glory is
To stamp the seal of time on aged things,
To fill with worm-holes stately monuments,
To feed oblivion with decay of things;
To blot old books, and alter their contents,
To pluck the quills from ancient ravens' wings,
To spoil antiquities of hammer'd steel,
And waste huge stones with little water-drops,"

All are alike impelled to utter the same reflections on human and earthly mutability, saying,

—— "Cœlum et quodcunque sub illo est Immutat formas, tellusque et quicquid in illa est +."

Now, when thoughts are thus gravely occupied, it is natural to have one's attention excited by the fact, which meets us at every turn, of the singular exemption from this law of mutability and decay enjoyed by the foundation which Catholicism unfolds:—for, while the Pagan can only say, generally—

"Nil equidem durare diu sub imagine eadem Crediderim—— ‡,"

the Catholic points at the Church, and repeats the same poet's words, which he applies to her—

"Una est, quæ reparet, seque ipsa reseminet §,"

while all religions, broken off from the parent stock of Rome, prove to be like "annuals that grow about a tree, and seem to vie with it for a summer, but fall and die with the leaves in autumn, and are never heard of more." A celebrated modern author is struck with this contrast. Speaking of the French Revolution, he says, "The Papacy had been buried under the great inundation; but its deep foundations had remained unshaken; and when the waters abated, it appeared alone, amidst the ruins of a world which had passed away. The republic of Holland was gone, and the empire of Germany, and the great council of Venice, and the old Helvetian League, and the

House of Bourbon, and the Parliaments and aristocracy of France. Europe was full of young creations,—a French empire, a kingdom of Italy, a confederation of the Rhine. Nor had the late events affected only territorial limits and political institutions. The distribution of property, the composition and spirit of society, had, through great part of Catholic Europe, undergone a complete change. But the unchangeable Church was still there."

Now, the Church is not thus immutable and eternal for her own sake. She is so, to make all who belong to her immutable and eternal. On the road of contemplatists it will, therefore, prove a strong attraction to hear, that we ourselves, that our friends, that all whom we have ever known, companions perhaps in pleasure long past, not to be recalled, with unmixed sentiments, can be made partakers of this immutability. That the only resource for the heart, even in the days of its rejoicing, is not a reckless laughing over graves, but that a silent prayer, a secret alms, a kind, good action, may all be instrumental in accomplishing this end for those we cherish most, or for others that we once loved, and whom we now, perhaps, can never remember without tenderness and tears.

Thus a natural contemplation of the brevity of time, and the mutability of earth, including human thoughts derived from it, and love itself, with those who were its objects, leads men to estimate the importance of what is to follow,—the Divine power which upholds the Catholic Church maintaining it unchangeable, and the interest which we all have to take advantage of the felicity which is so freely offered to the human race.

A second issue is effected by means of the silence reigning on this road, which enables those who follow it, who, generally, are content to be Carthusians at least while wandering among these trees and craggy rocks, to hear the Divine voice which calls them to the centre. States may have passed decrees of banishment against all who visibly represent the Catholic Church; they may have overthrown her altars, driven out her pontiffs, attempted to wrest from them their titles; but, to the ear of contemplation, on this road, her still, low voice is heard, far beyond the hearing of the axe, to use the expression of our foresters; so that one may apply to her the lines—

"Inde latet silvis nulloque in monte videtur;
Omnibus auditur. Sonus est, qui vivit in illa\*."

"An empty house," say the Basques, "is full of noise." What turnult in the mind and heart of men who fear and hate the

way of contemplation, saying, with a French author, "La vie contemplative n'est que la paresse déguisée et l'inutilité poétisée\*! And, it is true, the man who adopts it seems, as a poet says—

"To common lookers-on, like one who dreams Of idleness in groves Elysian ——."

In their intelligence, the causes that most nearly affect them, if concerned with what is not immediately present, have evidently no chance of obtaining a hearing. But upon the road of contemplation, the men we meet are of a different character; they are not great speakers, men who are impatient until they hear themselves talk; those who pass by this track are rather susceptible of what St. Diadochus terms "the vehement desire of the best silence †," and disposed to think with our forefathers, who used to say—

" De grande éloquence Petite conscience."

And, again,

"Dy moy que signifie gabbe? Il signifie deux fois menty."

And, again, citing the distiches of Cato, of the twelfth century-

"Virtutem primam esse puta compescere linguam; Proximus ille Deo qui scit racione tacere."

They are not men of noise, men of public meetings

-- " ἀγορῆ δέ τ' ἀμείνονές είσι, καὶ ἄλλοι‡."

Like the yew-trees that Haller says, in Switzerland, are only found in forests the least frequented, 'in obscuris sylvis,' and on the brink of precipices, these men must be sought for in solitudes, where silence and attention dwell. They fly from the crowd of wranglers, from all boisterous demonstrations where high words are used to conceal low thoughts. To them the lowly shrubs partake of human voice; and, as we observed on a former road, the trees and rocks are their instructors—

"Ipsi lætitiå voces ad sidera jactant Intonsi montes ; ipsæ jam carmina rupes Ipsa sonant arbusta."

Coming within reach of any sounds that mar the natural echoes of the forest, they say, with Henry the Sixth—

<sup>\*</sup> Le Bn. Chaillon des Barres, L'Abbaye de Pontigny, 20.

<sup>†</sup> De Perfect. Spir. 87. ‡ xviii. 106.

"How irksome is this music to my heart! When such things jar, what hope of harmony?"

They withdraw secretly, content to reply, in the words "Tu vince loquendo," to those who resemble Justice Clack, in the old comedy, monopolizing the whole discourse, and, at each attempt of the accused to utter a word in his defence, interrupting him with a sort of formula of their own, saying, "Nay, if we both speak together, how shall we hear one another?"

Now, in opposition to this loquacity, where such resigned silence is embraced, it may in general be safely predicated that Catholicism is the natural bourne. Malfats, in the old tragedy, explains his readiness to hear a moral strain by the retreat in

which Spinella finds him:

—— "Mine ears are gladly open, For I myself am in such hearty league With solitary thoughts, that pensive language Charms my attention."

Here is a great step gained; and, moreover, to men loving silence itself, the Church is not without attraction; for, besides, having every day what may be called, her "silent meetings," as if expressly to win those who loved to meet silently in the presence of God, she speaks little even in her prayers. "There being nothing that the mind of man is so apt to kindle and take distaste at as words," that high truth which inspires her, forbids the use of many, when the Eternal mind is to be invoked by all in common. Contemplative men find this brevity admirable. It suits their highest conception of intercourse with God; and those who only see them pass must feel convinced of it; for silent as a consecrated urn.

----- "There is thrown
Over their look the shadow of a mood
Which only clothes the heart in solitude
A thought of voiceless depth."

But, on all occasions, the Catholic tendency of that silence which belongs to attention, is felt upon this road. Some brothers embarked to pass over and visit St. Anthony; and, in the same ship was an old man, bound on the same errand, and they knew it not; and they sat and talked together on holy things, but the old man kept silence; and, on coming to St. Anthony, they met again; and the saint asked the old man if he had found his companions good brethren. 'They are good,' he replied; 'but their house has no door, so that whoever wishes may enter the stable, and loose the ass \*.'" The judgments of

<sup>\*</sup> Pelagius Diaconus de Vita SS. Patrum, c. 4.

such men, when pronounced against Catholicism, have no great weight in the estimation of contemplatists. A distinguished philosopher came to a Protestant University, and assisted at one of their evening conversations; being asked, as he walked home, how he liked the company, he replied, "They spoke a great many words." He was an ornithologist, from the forests of America, who, if he had heard Catholicism reviled, might have expressed his feelings in the old terms, and said, "How every fool can play upon the word! I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence; and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots."

The facility of this opening to the centre may be inferred from many observations made by the holy Fathers in ancient times, as when St. John Climachus says, "Taciturnity is the adversary of ambitious doctrine, a secret progress to God, a hidden ascent \*;" and that a cautious hiding of wisdom constitutes an invisible peregrination +, which sentence agrees with the saying

of the Pythagorean bard-

ου τοι άπασα κερδίων φαίνοισα πρόσωπον άλάθει άτρεκής. καὶ τὸ σιγᾶν πολλάκις ἐστὶ σοφώτατον ἀνθοώπων νοῆσαι 1.

St. Paulinus recognizes this issue from the desire of silence, and invites us to follow it. "Confugisti," he says, "ad pietatis silentium, ut evaderes iniquitatis tumultum. Bonum est viro sedere singulariter et tacere. Our Lord was silent, who said,-Tacui, numquid semper tacebo? Ipsius ergo voluntatem et judicium taciti sustinemus qui potens est et nunc in nobis tacere, et cum voluerit, interpellare pro nobis §." He who sits in silence, watching the course of human events, can hardly fail to notice the Catholic Church, and the glorious, intellectual, and moral luminaries which attend her through the night of time-

"Sidera cuncta notat tacito labentia cœlo "."

Old Homer describing a contemplatist, says

--- οὐδέ οἱ ὕπνος ἐπὶ βλεφάροισιν ἔπιπτε, Πληιάδας τ' ἐσορῶντι, καὶ όψὲ δύοντα Βοώτην.

As these stars inspire with elevated thoughts the belated pilgrim, returning over wastes and gloomy heaths, so shine the lights of the Church's firmament to him who wanders in silence

<sup>\*</sup> Scal. Par. xi. + Id. xxx. ‡ Nem. . § Div. Paulini Epist. i. # Æn. iii. 515.

through the world's obscurity. Lately, a celebrated German lady, describing the progress of her conversion to the Catholic Church, and tracing the impressions conducive to it, which were caused in her by the different countries she had visited, speaking of her travels to Jerusalem, says, "This journey had charms for me. The majestic calm of the East received me in its arms; and I felt myself by degrees transported from the confused agitation of the European societies into a solemn and grandiose region, through which the voice of the prophets arrived more distinctly at my ear, and at my heart. I was never weary reading Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the Psalms, as if I was expecting the accomplishment of their promises; and a certain Divine hope took formal possession of my whole being \*."

Another opening to the centre, from this road, may be traced to the effects of that natural piety which in general belongs, more or less, at intervals, to those who are thoughtful. "Men who journey in the active life," says St. Bonaventura, "are frequently disturbed; but the spirit, walking in the ways of the contemplative life, is sweetly consoled by God. What was the best part that Mary chose?—Vacare et videre quam suavis est Dominus †." It is opening a great avenue to truth, when men are ready for calm and unprejudiced meditation on high, spiritual, and moral subjects, each being able to say of himself, in the words of Cicero, "Ego vero philosophiæ semper vaco t." And this is the character of those who take the present road; for, from the tumultuous life of the world they are generally willing to be delivered; and it is by mental ascents and elevations of the heart, that they can steal away from the noises which disturb and confuse others. The thunder of the rushing torrents sounds three times louder in the forest by night than by day; though in a wilderness, there is nothing at any time to interrupt the repose of nature; and philosophers, to account for the fact, suggest that perhaps the currents of heated ascending air impede the sound by day, which currents cease during the cold night; in like manner, the current of pious thoughts which ascend to God, while men walk in the pure, attenuated atmosphere of contemplation, cause the earthly echoes of this life to disturb them less. Not alone a generally pious heart, but even the pious practices recognized by Catholicity, seem to belong to those who take the present road; and so the poet, inviting to contemplation, recommends that men should practise even abstinence,-

<sup>\*</sup> Hist. de la Conversion au Catholicisme de la Comtesse Ida de Hahn-Hahn, racontée par Elle-même.

<sup>†</sup> De Septem Itineribus Æternitatis. † De Div. i. 7.

"Discite, non inter lances mensasque nitentes, Cum stupet insanis acies fulgoribus, et cum Acclinis falsis animus meliora recusat; Verum hie impransi mecum disquirite \*."

"As no one comes to wisdom unless by grace, justice, and know-ledge, so no one," says St. Bonaventura, "can come to contemplation unless by holy conversation, and devout prayer, with perspicuous meditation. As, therefore, grace is the foundation of rectitude of will and of perspicuous reason, so we must begin by first praying, then by holy living, and thirdly by attending to the spectacle of truth; so gradually rising by attention until we come to the lofty mountain where we can behold the God of Gods in Sion †."

In the natural forest, men have been directed best, even as to their material road, by a reverential trust in Providence. Coming to where three ways met, and being in total ignorance which he should follow, brother Giles, commending himself to God, chose the right one, which led him to the place of his destination. The same reliance was evinced by St. Francis, when journeying once with brother Massæus, and coming to a junction of ways, one leading to Sienna, another to Florence, and a third to Arezzo, being in doubt which to choose, he told his companion to turn himself round without regarding, and that they would take whatever road his face was directed to after the circumvolution §.

In the spiritual forest, at least the same confidence might not betray the man of contemplation. The soul, "which, yet pent in the body, tendeth towards the sky |," enters by contemplations, however otherwise involved in sinful life, into affinity with the Catholic Church. "In this journey of meditation," says St. Bonaventura, "God, as if a traveller joins company with wayfarers, talks with them, abstracts them from temporal, invites them to eternal things, and so refreshes the spirit from the labour of life, that they say when he departs, 'Nonne cor nostrum ardens erat in nobis, dum loqueretur nobis in via?" This journey begun, perhaps, with all the faults that our frail flesh is heir to, leads eventually to that life of holy obedience with which Catholicism is so conversant; and therefore St. John Climachus says, that "as the flower precedes the fruit, so peregrination aut corporis aut voluntatis, precedes obedience "." "The soul that is quiet, pacific, devout, solitary, and tranquil, will be

<sup>\*</sup> ii. 2.

<sup>‡</sup> Spec. Vitæ S. F. ii. c. xi.

<sup>||</sup> Dante, Purg. 14.

<sup>+</sup> Itinerarium Mentis in Deum.

<sup>§</sup> Id. 39.

<sup>¶</sup> Scal. Par. iv.

visited," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "by angelic spirits, and it will spiritually conceive Christ\*." But the road which leads to an imitation of the blessed Virgin, must end in the Catholic Church; and to that bourne, accordingly, the way of contemplation tends. So in their own hearts, if exposed to the needful action from without, the good will ever find the earnest of the hope which makes them great.

That night of the world which prevents men from proceeding to the centre, contemplation causes them to recognize as the

source of all disquietude,

"——Curarum maxima nutrix

Thoughtful experience leads them to love that quiet and tranquil life—in omni pietate et castitate,—in which the Apostle makes to consist all the fruit of peace that is given by God; and this a late poet so clearly discerned, that he represents his Lamia as pained by the changed look of recollection which she detected in the man whose ruin she sought, saying,

"——and she began to mean and sigh
Because he mused beyond her, knowing well
That but a moment's thought is passion's passing bell."

Contemplation prevents men from so abusing continually the peace of time, as Salvian complains of his contemporaries—"ut in luxuria, ut in flagitiis, ut in omni scelere vivant," causing peace to be against their own interest, rendering them worse, and changing the very nature of things by their iniquity †. Contemplation, as in the old moral play, in which it is personified, says to its disciple,—

"Naye, naye, good sone, lysten unto me,
And marke these wordes that I do tell thee:
Thou hast folowed thyne one wyll many a daye,
And lyved in syne without amendement;
Therfore in thy conceyte assaye
To ask God mercy, and kepe his commaundement,
Than on thee He wyll have pyte
And brynge thee to heven, that joyful cyte."

Contemplation thus leads to faith, to humility, sobriety, mercy, and sanctity, which God, by the Catholic Church, requireth from men, calling them thereby not to labour, but to recreation;

<sup>&#</sup>x27;\* De Partu Virg.

for, as Salvian remarks, "none of these fruits of contemplation load us as a burden, but, on the contrary, adorn us; and not this only, but adorn the present so as still more to adorn the future life; so good, so pious, so inestimable, is the Divine

mercy \*."

"The act of wisdom," those who take this road say, with St. Bonaventura, "is to contemplate God, not in any manner, but from love, with a certain experimental sweetness in affection. For he of Lincoln says, that 'wisdom springs from love, which leads to the light of knowledge and the taste of sweetness, as fire causes light and flame." "Dimissa sunt ei peccata multa," says Rupertus, "non quia operata est multum, sed quia dilexit multum †." Contemplation does not lead to dark and condemnatory views of our fellow-creatures; it rather disposes men to see them in a cheerful and hopeful light. Thoughtfulness and love are often secret companions in those whom men little suspect of either. "Hæc est vera vita fuga solius ad solum." The road of contemplation is taken by those who love this celebrated maxim of Plotinus, which Cardinal Bona cites, adding, in the true contemplative style, "let us ascend, then, and enter the clouds which rest on the mountains, separating us from earth below !." Being thus conducted to the presence of God by contemplation, men find in general, that as they advance upon the road, they contract that alienation of mind for the proud, ambitious, and money-loving world, which removes the greatest part of the obstacles presented to those who are journeying towards the Catholic Church; and this may be now considered as constituting a fourth issue.

Men by nature of a contemplative turn will be more inclined to consort with memorials or institutions of Catholicity, than to visit every day that Vanity Fair described by an old writer, though this fair, as he says, "is no new-erected business, but a thing of ancient standing." He indeed pretends that "the ware of Rome, and her merchandise, is greatly promoted in this fair," but a moment's observation suffices to show that it is the Catholic, and not his opponent, who may be out of his place in such a resort. It is he who often literally "wears a kind of raiment different from that of any who trade in this fair;" it is he who "is sometimes said by the people of the fair to be mad, and one of those come to put all things into a confusion in the fair." It is he in general who "sets very light by all their wares, caring not so much as to look upon them;" concentrating all his hopes and wishes "in illo recessu interioris hominis," as St. Augus-

<sup>\*</sup> Id. vii. 2. + De Vict. Verbi Dei, xi. 28. ‡ Bona, Via Compend. ad Deum.

tin says, "ubi fulget animæ, quod non capit locus; ubi sonat quod non rapit tempus; ubi olet quod non spargit flatus; ubi sapit quod non minuit edacitas; et ubi hæret quod non divellit satietas."

They of the world may not comprehend this state. Saint Simon speaks of Fenelon passing twelve years in his diocese as "growing old in an abode of darkness, under the useless weight of his hopes; and seeing his years flow on in a sameness which must have reduced him to despair;" which makes the Cardinal de Bausset say, that "M. de Saint Simon loved only the court, saw only the court, and thought that no one could be happy but at the court; and not knowing Fenelon personally, that he ascribed to him, unconsciously, his own sentiments."

In the beginning of their walk, few anticipate whither leads this road, or what it becomes. As the guide says to Dante, they

might hear,

"—— Such is this steep ascent,
That it is ever difficult at first,
But more a man proceeds, less evil grows,
When pleasant it shall seem to thee \*."

"The mind of man," says St. Bonaventura, "is a paradise while

he meditates celestial things †."

"I once," says an old hermit, "asked Abbot Peter, disciple of the Abbot Lot, saying, when I am in my cell, my mind is in peace; but when any brother comes to me, and relates to me the words of those who are without, my mind is troubled 1." On the road of contemplation, these reports from without are for a while excluded, and hence men realize the tranquil state which is so favourable to the reception of truth. St. Bernard says that "the holy soul, on account of imitation, may be called heaven. It is," he says, "the seat of God. Ego et Pater ad eum veniemus et mansionem apud eum faciemus:" and again we read, "Et inhabitabo in eis et deambulabo in illis. The soul increases into a holy temple in the Lord, whose latitude is love." St. Stephen of Grandmont makes the same observation, saying, "Qui in Deo delectatur ubique paradisum invenit \( \)." And St. Paulinus infers that the contemplatist needs no pleasure or consolation that the world can offer; adding, "Non enim modica animis credentium voluptas est—in paradiso jam animis deambulare | ."

In fact, not even the heathen philosophers were insensible to

|| Ep. xxxiii.

<sup>\*</sup> Purg. 4. + De Sept. Itin.

<sup>†</sup> De Vita SS. Patrum, c. xi. § S. Steph. Grandim. Lib. Sententiarum, cap. 2.

the pleasures arising from contemplation, as may be inferred from their praises of that leisure,

"--- Non gemmis, neque purpura venale, nec auro \*."

"No pleasure but that of the sage," says Plato, "is real or pure. Every other is only a shadow or phantom of pleasure †."
"Methinks I hear these words, dear Crito," says Socrates,
"as the Corybantes catch the sound of flutes; they resound to me, and render me insensible to every other discourse ‡." On this road, therefore, the bitter and troubled spirit of the world, that great obstacle in the way of all advancing to the Catholic Church, is met by an attraction which dissolves the spell; and men are prepared for those lessons on the vanity of an ambitious life, which enable them to discover the Divine wisdom of all that she ordains. He who can say, like the Epicurean poet on the Via Sacra, that he proceeds according to his custom,—

"Nescio quid meditans nugarum, totus in illis §,"

may, according as the wind sets in, regard Catholic doctrines, practices, and institutions, with indifference or aversion; but a sense of the deceitfulness of the scene around them in the world, and of the high intellectual enjoyments which flow from the central fountain of all true philosophy, must open a way to many who take the road of contemplation, and gradually dispose them for appreciating the Divine character of that Church which is in without being of the world; constituting, however indignant statesmen, imbued with a pagan philosophy, may become on hearing it, a true empire in an empire. Catholicity will not then be rejected for the reason that it is opposed in so many points to the worldly standard of individual or national excellence; and that it unfits men for conversing with the shadows of that dark cavern to which Plato compares the present life.

On other roads, the recognition of this fact is sufficient to turn multitudes aside; for, as St. Bonaventura says, "accustomed to the darkness of creatures, and the phantasms of sensible things, when our mind beholds that highest light, it seems to itself to see nothing, not understanding that this darkness itself is the utmost illumination of our mind; as when the eye sees pure light, it seems to itself to see nothing ||." But on the way of contemplation, men are prepared for taking a different

<sup>\*</sup> ii. 13. † De Repub. ix. ‡ Plato, Crito. § Sat. i. 9.

view of all things, and for estimating the worldly opinions, as far as they are ambitious and false, at their real value. They are prepared for attending to the voice from the cloud, saying, "Audite illum." "Do you think," demands Plato, "that one escaped from this cave would be jealous of the honours, praises, and recompenses that are given to him who best comprehends the shadows in their passage through the cave, or that he would envy the state of those who are the most powerful and honoured within it? Would he not, like Achilles in Homer, prefer passing his life in the service of a poor labourer, and suffering every thing rather than resume his first state among the benighted in that cave, and its first illusions? And if he were to converse with the prisoners within it, would he not laugh at those who should say, that by mounting so high he had lost his sight, and that if any one should seek to draw them forth after him, he ought to be seized and put to death \*?"

In old symbolic painting, the world is represented by a person wearing a mask, and holding a balance, of which the scale containing money-bags and a crown is pressed down by a demon; while the other, in which are a chalice, a rosary, and the emblem of discipline, flies upwards. Beneath are inscribed

these words,-

"At nonne hos mundus, mera ceu ludibria spernit?
Delirat; nec vera videt; nec judicat æqua."

So Penthea, in the tragedy of the Broken Heart, says,

of human greatness are but pleasing dreams,
And shadows soon decaying; on the stage
Of my mortality, my youth hath acted
Some scenes of vanity, drawn out at length
By varied pleasures, sweeten'd in the mixture,
But tragical in issue ———"

Thus is the contemplatist disabused, and when he hears men dissuading him from advancing to Catholicity, by alleging the common vulgar notions respecting the superior effects of the new custom, and the principles which offer worldly greatness as an end, he replies, with the French philosopher, "Vous allez à la gloire, O mes amis, et moi j'en reviens." It is to such men that our poet says,—

"You that, too wise for pride, too good for pow'r, Enjoy the glory to be great no more,

<sup>\*</sup> De Repub. vii.

And carrying with you all the world can boast, To all the world illustriously are lost."

"By degrees I have learned to despise the earth," says the Count de Maistre, "it is only nine thousand leagues round. Fi! It is an orange \*"

Petrus Denaisius, in his old age, loving solitude, placed in his room a picture of Elija with the raven in the wilderness, and

under it these words,-

"Alloquii satis est, cœtus fugisse profanos †."

Contemplation renders a man simple and natural in his tastes and habits. It makes him say with the poet,—

"Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down,
Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
With here and there a violet bestrown,
Fast by a brook or fountain's murmuring wave."

A forester might say, that the contemplatist resembles, in this respect, the horse chesnut, which, though formed most for decoration, cannot live in the press of close forests, perishing when surrounded thickly with other trees.

The contemplatist says with a poet, in his ode to even-

ing,—

"Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene,
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.
Or if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut
That from the mountain's side
Views wilds and swelling floods."

It will not be an extravagance to infer, that he has, therefore, an issue before him to Catholicity, by means of his affinity with those men and institutions of the Church, that are found in solitary places. The Hilarions, Jeromes, Brunos, Teresas, and Bernards of Catholicism seem to beckon to him, and point the way; telling him that the Church formally sanctions and sanctifies the life that he seems to love best. Like them we hear him say,  ${}^*\text{E}\rho\eta\mu i\alpha\varsigma$   $\delta\bar{\epsilon}t$ . We observe that whenever an opportunity occurs, he repairs to the Catholic religious house, as Cicero went to the academy, saying, "solitudo erat ea, quam

\* Lettres, i. 24.

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<sup>+</sup> Richebourcq, Ultima Verba, &c.

volueramus \*." He can, in fact, apply to it frequently the poet's lines.

"——Thou dost lie
The giant brood of pines around thee, clinging
Children of elder time; in whose devotion
The chainless winds still come, and ever came
To drink their odours and their mighty swinging
To hear—an old and solemn harmony."

Here, too, are oaks and cypresses; here the bees sweetly hum over the wild flowers; here the clear, cold stream glides between the shelving rocks, and the birds sing above the leafy canopy. All these objects, sounds, and impressions, can, therefore, guide him to the centre; for, as we have often had occasion to observe, it is Catholicism that leaves its sign, its mark at least, in places meet for contemplation. " Amidst the attractive murmur of solitude," says Calderon, "I find a fountain whose bright crystalline wave charms the eyes; on its banks I enjoy the cool shade which refreshes me after wandering through the woods." Such a spot can recall the memory of a Dom Didien de la Cour retiring to the hermitage of St. Christophe, near Rarecourt, where was only a little ruined chapel. There one can imagine him repairing the fountain, cultivating the little garden, praying in the chapel, and at the close of the day climbing up into the vault of the roof by means of a ladder, which he draws up after him, to be more secure and solitary. "Factus sum sycut nycticorax in domicilio." "The bat," continues Hugo of St. Victor, "represents the holy man who, like Christ, loves ever darkness, since he wishes every sinner to be converted and saved; and he hates the light of the vanity of human glory; and he seeks his food flying by night; for he seeks to convert sinners in the body of the Church: he watches by night, observing the darkness of sinners, that he may avoid their errors. He dwells in ruined walls; for he considers the defects of the world, and remembers that it will be destroyed t."

But of what does not the contemplatist avail himself in seeking such associations? The flies, sheltering in winter in the broken cavities of a sunny wall, will sometimes transport him to those sides of rocky mountains in which some hermit seeks shelter from the wintry life of men. "Lone joy is not sad," he says, "it lacks not the mirror of the gracious eye." The very displeasure with which it is regarded by those who fly

<sup>\*</sup> De Finibus, v. 1.

<sup>#</sup> Hugo of St. Vict. De Bestiis, 35.

from solitude enhances in his eyes its merit. He prefers Leiodes to all the other suitors, for the reason that he loved it,—

"Ιζε μυχοίτατος αἰεί\* ἀτασθαλίαι δέ οἱ οἴφ
'Εχθραὶ ἔσαν, πᾶσιν δὲ νεμέσσα μνηστήρεσσιν\*.

The road of contemplation leads to Catholicism thus, by the natural habits which it generates. He who walks, like Ulysses,—

Έρπύζων παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης, Πόλλ' ὀλοφυρόμενος †,

will cling to the memory of the hermit of the poor rock, though he may have only met him on the page of old romance. The lover of the woods, who has visited tribes like those in South America, described by Cardinal Bembo in his history of Venice as building their houses in the trees, on account of the marshes, will be drawn by the great examples of men like St. Bernard, who approve of those repairing to the beech-trees to study, or like the hermits of the early and middle ages, to construct their cells among the branches. The meditative ranger of the hills will not overlook the signal that the peaceful life, associated with them by Catholicity, supplies. When the Spanish soldiery beheld the lonely mountain near the sources of the Guaviare, they gave it the name of Paramo de la Suma Paz,—the Seat of Perfect Peace. They were familiar with the influence which Catholicism can shed upon such solitudes.

But let us hear St. Bonaventura, describing the motive of his visit to Alvernia, and the fruits of his contemplative journey. "I pray," he says, "that God may direct our feet in the way of that peace which passeth all understanding; of that peace which our Lord Jesus Christ preached and gave, which our Father St. Francis proclaimed in all his discourses, beginning and ending, announcing peace; in every salutation wishing it; in every contemplation sighing for it, as a citizen of that Jerusalem of which the man of peace, who was pacific towards those who hated peace, said, 'Rogate quæ ad pacem sunt Hierusalem.' After the example, then, of our blessed founder, whose unworthy successor I am, desiring to inhale that desire, I was induced, through the desire of spiritual peace, in the thirty-third year after his transit, to proceed to the mountain of Alvernia, as to a place of quiet; and there I treated of certain mental ascents to God, which are here investigated ‡."

It is the man fond of contemplation who will most feel the charm of such Catholic narratives. He will feel himself drawn

on by a certain elective affinity to revere, within himself, the faith of such men. No one will ever persuade him to scoff at an order which produced so many lovers of nature, like that Bernard de Quinta-Valle, who had such grace of contemplation, that besides often spending whole nights in the woods, he sometimes wandered all alone through the mountains during twenty or thirty days; which caused brother Giles to say of him, that

"he fed like a swallow flying \*."

If you will hear a modern author, there is something in the very pleasure of following a mountain pass, which directs the mind to those thoughts which are associated with Catholicism; "for," says Gerbet, "while the points of material view vary continually as the body mounts and descends, the sudden variation of the points of moral view give to the soul a movement of the same kind. Influenced by these impressions, which sink and elevate it, the soul also descends and rises. From experience," he adds, "I feel convinced that this singular concordance between the march of the soul and that of the body, is not unconnected with that charm which such places inspire †."

Whatever may be thought of such observations, it is certain that the road of contemplation attaches men to the recollections which the lives of holy Catholics supply. It is they who follow it, that above all others love to read, for instance, about a St. Gertrude, and her custom in the evening, as the day declined, to pour forth her devout complaints on the hardness and ingratitude of men. The habit of thoughtfulness trains men, sweetly and gradually, to that love of solitude which cannot, perhaps, as Drexelius observes, be gained at once. It renders men pleased with the counsels which he adds, saying, "accustom yourself by degrees to solitude. Learn at first for a short time to bear it. Begin with part of an hour, proceed to part of a day; then to a whole day, then devote a week to it. You will find the progress easy t."

Thus are they drawn on at length to appreciate the excellence, if not for themselves, at least for others, of the religious state, and of the devout retreats which Catholicism inspires and supplies; to reverence its contemplative guides, to recognize them as the best models, to say with the poet, However un-

worthy,

"them I love, And of their train am I."

Upon this road, instead of magnifying what theologians call the world, believing in its unlimited capabilities, and making the

<sup>\*</sup> Spec. Vitæ S. Franc. P. ii. c. 7. + Esquisse de Rome Chrét. ‡ Rosæ Select. Virtut. i. 3.

development of all its resources the criterion of their own and of their country's wisdom, men forget at times, and in some sense or other, renounce the whole sphere of motives and ideas which are included in the expression-the world, so as to appear to the lovers of earth men fit only for imaginary pleasures, indolent and deficient in that energy applied to earthly things, which constitutes the character that they alone admire. "The spirit walking in the contemplative life," says St. Bonaventura, "takes the rest of sleep, and then, like Jacob, beholds spiritual What is it to sleep on the road, but in the passage of the present life to close the eyes of the mind to the love of temporal things: eyes of concupiscence, which the devil opened, and which innocence keeps shut. This sleep so pleases God, that with an oath He prohibits such to be awakened, saying, 'Adjuro vos, filiæ Jerusalem, ne excitetis neque evigilare \*.' Such men will be the last to throw discredit on Catholicism, as teaching indifference to what the world esteems. They will discern that this indifference is the result, not of indolence, or of contemptuous ignorance, but of a careful, intellectual appreciation of its vanity, as indeed the single work of Innocent III., which is especially devoted to a solemn picture of human life in its natural condition, can demonstrate.

But every where occur passages which admit of no other conclusion. Thus, Peter the Venerable, writing to a hermit, says, "Have you forgotten with what fervour we used to converse on the multiplied miseries of this world? How often, with our door closed, and no one present with us but He who never fails those who think of Him, or speak of Him, have we talked together of the blindness and hardness of the human heart, of the various snares of sin, of the wiles of the demon, of the abyss of the judgments of God, of his designs on the children of men, of the great salvation brought to the human race by the incarnation and passion of the Son of God; and, finally, of the dreadful day of last judgment; and not only in the monastery, but wherever I went I had you for a companion of my life. In the various journeys we made to different countries, neither the flames of the sun, nor the ice of Boreas, nor the fury of tempests, nor the rains, nor the deep mud of the hardly passable roads, nor the asperity of mountains, could ever separate us. Every where we pursued our secret conversations."

Such is "the studious meditation of eternal things; by which," says St. Bonaventura, "the human spirit tends to the intrinsic secret, and eternal manor, of our Lord Jesus. This follows the first journey of eternity; for when the ray of right intention foreshows speculatively to the human spirit the eternal

and beatific end of all consolation and consummation (which is necessary, for unless the human spirit somehow foreknew that end, it would not know whither it tended, or where it could rest; and unless it descried that end, it would never seek for it; but, like another Cain, from the face of the Lord cast out, it would never remain constant) studious meditation investigating all things, intent upon this end, seeks it as if practically, and prompts the spirit to hasten to it \*."

Contemplation, therefore, presents an issue to Catholicity by familiarizing the mind with the difference between temporal and eternal things, and disposing it to despise comparatively the former, in accordance with the dictates of reason itself, as well as with the precepts of the holy faith, and remark that contemplation leads even those farthest from sanctity to similar

reflections; as when Francisco says in the old play,

"'Tis gone again; since such are all life's pleasures, No sooner known but lost; he that enjoys 'em The length of life, has but a longer dream, He wakes to this i' the end, and sees nothing."

The thought of eternity was called by St. Augustin, "the great thought,—magna cogitatio." This is the thought which still fills the Catholic Church, as it is that which in times past has made penitents, and hermits, and martyrs. Now, this is found chiefly on the road of contemplation, which leads to the conclusion of St. Eucherius, "negotium pro quo contendimus æternitas est." It follows, therefore, that no road more surely and directly leads to Catholicity.

Another opening may be considered as consisting in the direction of all knowledge, by contemplation, to a spiritual end. "The journey of contemplation," says St. Bonaventura, "is divided into different stages, or modes, according to the various considerations of saints, and the divers traditions of the learned." The road of contemplation is taken by many who ardently love study, of which the labour

"Revives, re-flourishes, then vigorous most When most unactive deem'd."

"As wicked idleness is the way to hell," brother Giles used to say, "so holy leisure is the way to heaven †." But this leisure is not inconsistent with the acquisition of knowledge. Men who withdraw themselves from superfluous talk and idle visits, as also from giving ear to news and reports, find time for much

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin.

reading. It is such, above all, who are found with books in their hands, and who are fond of traversing what may be termed a black-letter region, where the Catholic Church is full in view. "In omnibus requiem quæsivi," says Thomas à Kempis, "et nunquam inveni, nisi in angello cum libello;" or, as another says, "Nusquam tuta quies, nisi cella, codice, claustro \*." Moreover, this love of corners with a book can well guide spirits to such retreats as Henry Suso speaks of when relating, that "on a certain Sunday, as he sat in clear light, thinking within himself, and enjoying internal silence and tranquillity, he had a celestial vision †." Some men read books to little purpose. It is contemplation which makes reading fruitful. Knowledge is sometimes, by a certain extraordinary gift, the direct result of contemplation. What an exact knowledge of contemporaries whom she had never seen, and of the fate which awaited them, appeared in Marina de Escobar, while remaining in a corner of her house, to use her own expression! When Gustavus Adolphus was devastating Germany, contemplative Marina prayed earnestly for his conversion, "grieving," as she said, "that a man of such noble nature, and endowed with so many gifts, should hasten to perdition. She often, in spirit, conversed with that king, and it was wonderful that she should describe so exactly his countenance, the colour and form of his hair, and his stature: and when her confessors expressed fears that his power would long endure, she assured them that it would soon be at an end 1." Men of learned, contemplative mood, are attracted to that wood of sweet, sad, sublime, and glorious thoughts, which encompasses Catholicism. They turn naturally to that light of faith which centres in it, diffusing its beams unequally, but to some extent generally, over all who enter it.

"We all, sons of the Roman Catholic Church," says Marina's spiritual director, "live in faith. This is the only infallible light of our darkness, the guide of our way, the eye of our spirit, with which celestial mysteries may be seen; but there is this difference between faithful souls, that whereas some have this vision in a clouded, confused manner, as if all was covered with a thick veil, there are others for whom the veil seems of the finest texture, enabling them to discern through it, the things which are believed §:" so says Father Andrea Pinto Ramirez. Studious and contemplative retreat leads to an appreciation of the Divine truth of the Catholic doctrines, and to a dogmatic

<sup>\*</sup> Hæftenus, Œconomiæ Monast. lib. x. c. 3.

<sup>+</sup> De Veritate Dialog. c. xi.

<sup>‡</sup> P. ii. Lib. iii. c. 11, Vit. Ven. Virg. M.

<sup>§</sup> Id. P. ii. Lib. iii. c. 8.

union with the Church, which may be considered as another

opening presented to those who are here wandering.

In the first place, it imparts often, in general, a Catholic view of the whole of nature, and leads men, consequently, to behold, with indulgent eyes, the entire, the sensible world. Contemplatists learn to feel that "youth which represents life, features which represent sympathy, colours which represent splendour, light which represents joy, the beauty of heaven and of the ocean which represent infinity-that all these belong to God, who is the source from which they spring; similarly that justice, sweetness, inspiration, eloquence, tenderness, majesty, grandeur, purity, love, and all the traits of soul which enchant us, shining forth in actions, in human relations, in arts and poesy, are only an imperfect reflection of the Divine perfections \*." St. Bonaventura says, that "the first step of the soul's ascension, consists in the sensible world being used as a mirror reflecting the Creator +;" that the knowledge of truth "is acquired by the triple method of theology, namely, the symbolic, the positive, and the mystical. That by the symbolic we may learn to use sensible things rightly; by the positive, intellectual things rightly; and that by the mystic method, we may be led to supermental ecstasies, and that whoever wishes to ascend to God, must thus exercise these natural powers under reforming grace, and avoiding every fault which deforms nature 1."

Contemplation, in the simplest men, is often found to be the means of associating the spectacle of nature with the facts and doctrines of revelation. Humboldt, relating how he saw the wild beasts and birds coming out of the forest to drink in the river down which he was passing, mentions that "the steersman, an old Indian, who had been brought up in the house of an ecclesiastic, on seeing them, said with a pious air, 'Es como en el Paraiso.' It is here as in Paradise." The incident exemplifies what St. Stephen of Grandemont used to say, "a wise man

can meditate on the least thing \\"."

But contemplation creates also a certain affinity in the human mind with positive theology, and prepares it at least for receiving the Catholic doctrines.

A certain brother came to the Abbot Moyses, seeking counsel from him; and the old man said to him, "go and sit in your cell, and your cell will teach you all things,-vade et cede in cella tua, et cella tua docebit te universa ||." Three men went

† Itinerarium Mentis in Deum.

<sup>\*</sup> Études sur les Idées, &c. ii. 202.

<sup>§</sup> Lib. Sententiæ, 47.

Pelagius Diaconus, de Vita SS. Patrum, c. 2.

to the desert to consult an aged hermit, and related to him their tribulations and their doubts, and asked respecting the use of solitude. After a long pause without speaking, he showed them water in a vessel, and he said, "look at the water;" and it was turbid and muddy; and after a while he said again, "look now at it;" and the water was become so clear, that they could see their faces in it; and then he said to them, "such is he who remains amidst men, and he who contemplates alone. The first can see nothing; neither his sins within him, nor the heaven above him, nor the trees and other objects near him. The latter, when he rests and seeks solitude, learns to behold them all \* "

The mystic title of the revelations of St. Hildegarde-Scivias, "I know the ways of the Lord," might be used to express the results of contemplation. The book of nature, as we observed on a former road, is a prologue to that of revelation, the facts of which being once given, the conclusion is drawn by men who follow this road in the sense required by the Catholic Church; for there is a close connexion and continuity in the whole scheme of the Catholic religion, and not alone the first elementary doctrines, but even what appear to be the most delicate and abstruse deductions of Catholicism recommend themselves to thoughtful minds, so that it seems as if they could be the result of a personal working out of truth and of solitary contemplation; for there is nothing abruptly or authoritatively proposed by the Church which thought cannot trace to some essential truth; while history, to which contemplation must, from time to time, recur, can prove its antiquity and transmission from the earliest times. Thus, to take but one example, it results from the letter of the priests and deacons of Achaia relating the martyrdom of St. Andrew, published by Woog from a manuscript in the Bodleienne library, that the immaculate conception of Mary was professed by the faithful in the first two centuries +."

In fine, it must not be forgotten that it is on this road men meet with instances of the mystical union with truth which is discerned in those "supermental ecstasies" of which St. Bonaventura speaks. Here we have not time for observing this secret and attractive issue; but the discretion of the Church in regard to such fruits of contemplation must briefly be considered, as constituting a distinct signal set up for the direction of all who pass this way; for there is nothing in the schools of human philosophy that evinces similar wisdom, or supplies the same security. The holy fathers and doctors of the Church

<sup>\*</sup> Regula Solitariorum, Lib. Doct. Patr.

<sup>+</sup> Le Card, Lambruschini sur l'Immac, Concept. 51.

then say, that "a person having visions ought to be examined on all these points following. It should be ascertained whether it be a spiritual or worldly person; whether he live under discipline and special obedience; under a discreet, virtuous, mature Catholic, and experienced spiritual Father, or at his own pleasure and disposal. Whether he has immediately subjected his visions to examination and the judgment of his spiritual father with humility, fearing to be deluded, or has concealed them, or presumed on them, or boasted of them; and whether the result has been in him true virtues of obedience, humility, and charity, and prayer, or ostentation and the neglect of prayer, or desire of honour. Whether he be truly Catholic and obedient to superiors, or suspected on these points. Whether he has a good natural understanding, and a spiritual, and true, and discreet judgment of reason, or whether he be of light mind, of sudden impulse, and fanciful \*."

It may be remarked, that the persons and writings of this class, associated with Catholicism, and naturally present to the mind of all who take this road with any degree of instruction, have passed unscathed through this ordeal. The revelations of St. Bridget, for instance, have been declared authentic by three sovereign Pontiffs; Urban V., Gregory XI., and Martin V., the second of these Pontiffs, after having them carefully examined by many bishops and theologians, pronouncing as follows, "Totum quod in eis continetur et veritate conspicuum est, et sanctitate plenum pellucidum atque perfectum." Mysticism and supposed revelations, without the Catholic spirit and the Catholic safeguards, end, as all the world knows, in mental aberrations and practical results, as injurious to morals as to the security of states.

The contrast, therefore, between these and whatever bears the Catholic seal, is so palpable, that it can escape the attention of no one.

But having now considered separately the impressions produced by journeying on this road of contemplation following each other in a certain natural order, it only remains, in conclusion, to remark, that the aggregate result is frequently a safe arrival, and a constant persevering abode at the Catholic Church, to which all these attributes of contemplation furnish issues, widening as men advance through them to the centre.

Indeed, while following each, one may have perceived that though natural contemplation be an excellent preparation for guiding to the right way, it needs, at each step, the direction which Catholicity alone supplies; so that, in fact, it has all along been pointing to the Church as to that which furnishes the

Epist. Solitarii, c. ii. ap. id. p. 627.

necessary complement to render effectual its own services; for, as St. Bonaventura says, "unless the Divine allocution, or inspiration, excite the mind to meditation, and inspire the spirit as to what, how, and when it should meditate, human meditation will often be vain and useless; for in it will burn, not the fire of devotion, but the flames of vanity and cupidity \*"

Natural contemplation and silence have their evils, and it is the Catholic Doctrines and the Catholic institutions which supply the remedy for them. The man who only follows nature, rises often up like one whose tedious toil has endured

for years in a forlorn wilderness,-

"Who has not from mid-life to utmost age, Eased in one accent his o'erburden'd soul Even to the trees ——."

What a new life of blessedness for him is yielded by confession! "The human spirit," says St. Bonaventura, "walking on the journey of the contemplative life, grows in beauty." It ever asks, seeks, and knocks; for no one can be in any way disposed to those Divine contemplations which lead to mental ascents, unless, like Daniel, he be a man of desires +.

But what can be a greater object of desire than to participate in the privileges of those who are grounded on the rock of faith, to enjoy the intellectual advantages which they possess?

for,--

"What a fair seat have they from whence they may The boundless wastes and wealds of man survey!"

And though it be true that this is only known fully to those who are already so grounded, there are not wanting hints for others.

To that natural thoughtfulness of young hearts, to that desire of silence and privacy which at times visits most men; to that life of innocence and piety which often follows such retirement; to that alienation from the ambitious world which even many sinners feel, and to that sanctified study, which often distinguishes persons only by nature amiable, to that initiation, finally, in symbolic, positive, and mystical theology, which a familiarity with this road involves, there can be no end more natural than Catholicity of heart and mind, and, in fine, since generosity of spirit will grow with a love for truth, of profession. All these things belonging, more or less, to those who take this road, we may say here, with Bacchylides, "the way is open." What should keep back the contemplatist, naturally Catholic? "He who does nothing against truth," as the Count de Maistre

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin. Ætern.

says, "is very near him who defends it with courage;" "the human spirit," adds St. Bonaventura, "is thus invited to proceed on the journey of contemplation. Come from labour to rest; from sorrow to consolation; from weakness to impassability. Come to the interior visions of unitative contemplation, as to the interior of a desert where the flowers grow, that is, the splendours of celestial wisdom, which there appear in clear contemplation, which were hidden in your first desires. Come, the meadows are thrown open; the flowering herbs appear; the spiritual and odoriferous graces are all yielded in the Church. There is the odour of the grape, signifying those inebriated by doctrine. There is the olive, to signify mercy and light. There is the rose, symbolical of martyrdom; the lily, of purity; and the violet, of humility. Who will not rise up, and hasten to such a field \*?"

Those who refuse may, if they will, pretend that their contemplation leads them to different results. Some men, in regard to the light of faith, act like Charlemagne and his peers in the old romance, when yielding to the force of the enchantments of Mangis, they fall asleep just as the day dawns, and the sun is about to rise. But, without having recourse to magic for an explanation, there is reason to fear that they have suffered certain common natural disorders, enveloping their minds to prevent them from rightly reading the characters of nature presented in those results; for, in fine, besides that there are natures which always prefer the tortuous to the straight path, it is possible to quit the court, like Merlin the savage, and hide oneself in the woods, without being the nearer to God for that.

Solitude may be profound without being wholesome: religious observances may be practised with such a spirit as to prove that it is safer far to play with lightning than trifle in things sacred, and study may be purposely misdirected to favour an obstinate and predetermined will. "Lo!" exclaims St. Augustin, "in this immense forest, full of snares and perils, how many paths that are to be dreaded †!" So that it does not follow from the fact that some men do not arrive at Catholicity by this road, that the track itself was devious; they may, with more or less of consciousness, have faltered on it, and even turned aside from it, which is no proof against the validity of contemplation; for, as Leibnitz remarks, if geometry were as much opposed to our passions and views of present interest as morality, we would contest it and violate it no less, in spite of the demonstrations of Euclid and Archimedes, which would be treated as so many reveries full of paralogisms; and Joseph Scaliger, and Hobbes,

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itineribus Æternit.

who have written against Euclid and Archimedes, would not be

left with so few to keep them company.

But as it would not be well to leave the road of contemplation in such company, let us rejoin the happy troop of those who, instead of lingering too long "upon the difficult pass which leads from thought to action," and so verifying the popular saying, with respect to the danger incurred by being the hindmost, follow it, without stopping, to the Catholic Church. Others may resist her attraction, but the strong base and building of their love

> "Is as the very centre of the earth, Drawing all things to it ——."

Declamatory praises of what has won them may not be on their lips.

"Will you, they ask, with counters sum The past-proportion of her infinite?"

Applausive words escaping from them, may seem even to require an apology like that in the lines,—

"Celestial as thou art, oh! pardon, love, this wrong
That sings heaven's praise with such an earthly tongue."

But their convictions are as immovable as their faith; they say, with the eagle to our Chaucer,—

"Thou knowest full well this,
That every kindly thing that is
Y-hath a kindly stead; there he
May best in it conserved be;
Unto which place every thing
Thorough his kindly inclining,
Y-moveth for to comen to
When that it is away therefro.
For every thing by his reason
Hath his own proper mansion,
To which he seeketh to repair
There as it shoulden not impair."

That seat for us, they add, is Catholicity. There is the centre for those who practise contemplation. "To the Church," they say with St. Augustin, "Quies est apud te valde, et vita imperturbabilis. Qui intrat in te, intrat in gaudium Domini sui; et non timebit, et habebit se optime in optimo."

The general diffusive light resulting from contemplation, is

love; therefore, in the restoration of the original plan of the Creator respecting the unity of the human race by means of the supreme paternity, or the Popedom\*, and in the charity which constitutes the essential spirit of the vast family of the Church under that government, contemplatists will recognize Divine truth. You show them where love reigns, being recognized supreme; where union prevails amidst all varieties of character and circumstance. There, they know, is the centre. There is the bourne to which their desires tend.

"One of those," says the Count de Maistre, "whom the pseudo-reform calls ministers, not venturing to give them the name of priests, such power has conscience upon men, happened to be present once on Good Friday in a Cathedral Church, when the prayer for heretics and schismatics was offered up. Struck by those accents of love, and no doubt prepared for interpreting them by having previously taken some steps along this road, he exclaimed with a tone of conviction that came from the heart, 'It is she who is the mother: give her

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE ROAD OF DIVINE VIRTUE.



back her child."

erween trees and men the ancients have remarked that analogy of manners which we so often, on preceding roads, have had occasion to observe. Aristotle speaks of the points of resemblance between animals and plants †; and Theophrastus, treating on the trees, describes their birth and passions, their

lives and death. That contemplative, as well as exact writer, notices the differences between those children of the forest that are wild, and those that are tamed, as it were, by art and cultivation. "It is just," he says, "to call some wild and some tamed; referring the latter to that standard, or type of domestication, which is most tame. But man alone," he adds, "is truly and perfectly tame ‡." Culture, including all the methods

<sup>\*</sup> Gerbet, Esquisse de Rome Chrét. c. 7.

<sup>+</sup> Hist. Anim. v. 3.

<sup>‡</sup> De Historia Plantarum, i. 5.

employed in the administration of forests, grafting, with all the arts attained by those who study the amelioration of fruit, effect, as we all know, wonders in the society of trees. What a difference between the wild and the reclaimed cherry! the wild and the cultivated plum; the tree that bears crab apples, and that of the same nature and origin which yields such delightful fruit! Or, leaving the comparison of separate trees, what a contrast between a silent night of untouched woods, unwholesome and difficult to endure, dark, and obstructed with thorns, creepers, and an undergrowth of twisted briers, and a forest that may be called civilized, through which roads and paths have been made; where here and there spaces have been cleared by the axe, enabling the sun and air to penetrate freely; where soft grass and flowers cover all the ground, and where, in consequence, singing birds are heard from bough to bough! In the difficulty of finding a state of unmixed, uncontrolled nature, there is again another remarkable analogy between the woods of trees and men.

It is not because the beech woods of Berkshire are not titheable, for the reason assumed by lawyers, that they constitute parts of an aboriginal forest, though Cæsar, in his Commentaries, denies trees of this kind to be natives in Britain, that one who goes in quest of such a state can cry 'Ureka' when he enters that county. "If the name of primitive forest," says Humboldt, "be given to every wild forest on which man has never laid a reclaiming hand, the phenomenon belongs to many parts of the temperate and cold zones; but if it means a forest so truly impenetrable that it is impossible to clear with an axe any passage between trees of eight or twelve feet diameter for more than a few paces, then such forests belong only to the tropical regions. There we can see what nature is alone. There it is not only the interlacing of the climbers which makes the forest impenetrable; the lianes are only a small portion of the under-The chief obstacle is by an undergrowth of plants filling up every interval in a zone where all vegetation has a tendency to become ligneous."

The forest, therefore, by displaying before us, in mass and in detail, the happy effects of what may be termed a Divine art, since it comes from the Creator of trees and men, modifying, and even in some respects changing the order and disposition of its sons, may be said to prepare us for the great moral results of a different kind of art effecting the lives of men, and the character of virtue, which are met with upon this particular road of the seventh and last journey, described by St. Bonaventura as being the meritorious, or deiform operation of eternal things: that is, conformity of virtues, according to which we are to be judged; from taking which road, we may remark, there can be

no one dispensed, however well he may have availed himself of the signals and avenues presented hitherto; for, continues this great teacher, "when a man has been directed by a right intention to eternal things, expedited on the journey by frequent meditation; guided by limpid contemplation; inclined by fervent love; instructed by multiplied revelation, and experienced by sweet foretaste, it still remains that he should enter on eternal things by deiform and meritorious operation, without which the rest would nought avail \*."

Entering, however, upon this new road, without any retrospective considerations, the wayfarers should be told that they must not here expect any hints or assistance from the stranger, who, awed by its very title, and impressed with reverence by the character of those who follow it, will, through a natural shame, fall into the rear of the company, and simply follow, wondering and admiring. And, indeed, if called upon to speak, he might object on other grounds, and answer in the Roman words, accounting for his unwillingness, saying, "Nihil equidem novi, nec, quod præter ceteros ipse sentiam. Nam quum antiquissimam sententiam, tum omnium populorum et gentium consensu comprobatam sequor †."

The road of virtue, or of sanctity, according to some ideal, constitutes one of the great leading roads of life, which is taken by many persons in all ages of the world; for it is not even merely in times and countries enlightened by Christianity

that .--

"In prayers and penances
Putten hem many
Liveden full strait
In hope to have after
Heaven-riche bliss."

It must be our object to observe by what signals and avenues persons thus inclined are directed to the Catholic Church. We found signs and issues to it in abundance on the road of poor sinners, provided, as if expressly, for such a wayfarer as then passed, pointing out each as he came up to it. It remains now for others to remark those presented on the way of men of a very different character, who make goodness and sanctity their aim.

These directions and ways to a recognition of the truths of the Catholic religion, we shall find are constituted by the insufficiency of unassisted nature to conceive perfectly and practise virtue: by the supernatural, or heroic character of the Catholic virtue, as distinct from every false pretension: by the harmony

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itineribus Æternitatis.

<sup>+</sup> De Divinat. lib. i. c. 7.

which nevertheless exists between Catholic morality and natural goodness; by the practical advantages of that heroic element amidst the ordinary circumstances of life; by the opposition of the spirit of the world to it under every form; by the means employed by Catholicism to rear and perfect it; and, in fine, by the supernatural felicity which attends the exercise of that virtue which takes Catholicism, in its faith and discipline, for rule.

In the first place, then, it appears as if those who take this road can hardly fail to arrive at a conviction that nature unassisted is insufficient in regard both to the perfect conception

and exercise of virtue.

We cannot delay to measure all the grounds of this conclu-We should then have to begin even before the deluge. It is sufficient to bear in mind the great facts which are familiar to all persons conversant with the moral history of mankind, proving, whatever sophists may now pretend in glorification of nature, that with exceptions only, out of the supernatural sphere determined by revelation, ascribing to it geographical limits, evil and the spirit of evil triumphed in the world, raising up one power of many shapes, one shape of many names. Recur to what pagan ages saw. Hooke excuses himself from drawing at large the characters we meet with in the Roman story, saying, "I cannot, from the actions of the Scipio's, Marcellus's, Flaminius's, Æmilius Paulus's, Mummius Achaicus's, and such like worthies, form those high ideas of their virtue which their panegyrists, both ancient and modern, would have us entertain." The pompous character which La Harpe gives of the Roman people \*, is quite unwarranted by the facts of his-"The perpetual violation of justice," as an historian says, "was maintained by the political virtues of prudence and

Theophrastus devoted one of his works to paint the different characters which Greece produced. He paints faithfully enough the broad, prominent, sharply-defined varieties of human virtue; but how many graces that Catholicism imparts are wanting in this catalogue! To describe them even in his condensed style would require a work of at least equal magnitude. We shall observe briefly as we proceed, in what those graces, of which he knew nothing, consist. Review in general the whole history of men who were the least influenced by a supernatural element, and without taking an exaggerated view of facts, you

may exclaim, with the poet,-

"The good want power, but to weep barren tears, The powerful goodness want, worse need for them;

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<sup>\*</sup> Cours de Literature, liv. ii. c. 4.

The wise want love; and those who love want wisdom, And all best things are thus confused to ill. Many are strong and rich, and would be just, But live among their suffering fellow-men As if none felt——."

And in truth that mere prattle without practice is all the natural virtue which many men possess in all ages of the world, who make the greatest pretensions to it, will not be long doubted by those who "piously understand," as St. Augustin says, "the innate poverty of the human heart\*." As was observed upon a former road, of each best and greatest of the heathens, we can only say, in the words of Cicero, "Virtutem inchoavit; nihil amplius †;" and too often what Niebuhr says of Calpurnius Piso, might be truly added, "he was a remarkable man, but in a bad way."

Where naturalism sways the judgment, as with sophists, always in this respect distinguished from the people, "what we do worst, hitting a grosser quality, is oft cried up for our best act." Without the supernatural guidance offered by Divine and what may be termed heroic principles, as raising hearts above the interests of selfishness and time, the best man resembles Frederigo, in the fable, who is seen wandering at a distance, seeming undecided which way to direct his steps, sometimes taking one direction, and then changing to the opposite one;

which state is described by Dante, in the lines-

"For this man, who comes with me, and bears yet
The charge of fleshly raiment Adam left him,
Despite his better will, but slowly mounts:."

Such is still too often-

"Man, who is once a despot and a slave;
A dupe and a deceiver: a decoy;
A traveller from the cradle to the grave
Through the dim night of this mysterious day,
Bewilder'd, lost, forlorn."

Plato says that "insolence and anger develope in man the nature of the lion; voluptuousness, and flattery, and baseness, that of the serpent and ape §." Elsewhere he seems to suppose himself left to choose between those who have a sound nature with bad habits, and those who have good habits with a bad nature ||."

<sup>\*</sup> Epist. clxiii.

<sup>†</sup> De Finibus, v. 21. § De Repub. lib. ix. || De Legibus, lib. ii.

<sup>‡</sup> Purg. ii.

Advance to the moderns, who renounce faith, and among them, turn to what side you will, and there is no escape from the conclusion at which a great German philosopher arrives, that "the undivided sway of nature leaves men savage and loveless." A forester, present at such discussions, would say, that nature, in man, is like the beech-tree, which has, at the same time, excellent qualities and great defects. "Its wood is employed with advantage," says Varenne-Fenille, "in a multiplicity of ways: but it is subject to be worm-eaten, to split, and to shrink prodigiously; it has neither strength nor elasticity." Look at your philosophic moralists, at your respectable men, who have all the goodness that an abundant capital imparts in the judgment of the Exchange; and will you not admit the justice of the comparison? No doubt, they are proper for a multiplicity of purposes, where neither youthful generosity, nor pure disinterestedness, nor warm affections, nor a poetic turn of mind are wanting; but, whenever any occasion for such qualities presents itself, see how they always shrink within themselves, and present to every noble suggestion an impenetrable surface of insensibility and egotism. See what a crowd of villanous insects, in the shape of spiteful or ambitious intrigues, can be detected within the bark of that grave respectability with which they are so thickly covered.

Place us, as we exist, naturally or artificially, with all our human virtues, all our philosophic reason, all our elective affinities, all our affections, desires, and aims, all our titles to what is called religion by some, and respectability by others, in presence of those who, without any pretensions, perhaps, to either, are secretly, but heroically guided and moved as living members of the Catholic Church, and, truly, to use the poet's

words-

"We melt away,
Like dissolving spray,
From the children of a diviner day."

Accordingly, when the new world of the Church was disclosed to the Gentiles, it is to their former experience, as well as to his own, that the Apostle of the nations, proclaiming it, appeals, reminding them, that they were dead in their offences and sins; wherein in time past they walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of this air, and of the spirit that now worketh on the children of unbelief\*.

The second avenue to which this road leads us, is formed by a sense of the supernatural or heroic character of virtue in the Catholic Church; "the beauty of which," says St. Isidore, "is

twofold: the one beauty shining by good life here; and the other, by glorification in recompense \*," only to be seen when—

"Forth from the last corporeal men shall come Into the heav'n, that is unbodied light; Light intellectual, replete with love †."

To an observation of the first of these beauties, the attention of most men who take this road in Christian times, is, at some period or other of their lives, directed. Whether you open the ancient Catholic books, or recur to the achievements of men who studied or obeyed them, your conclusion, with respect to Catholic guides upon this road, must be, "they speak like men that know what virtue is, and can love it." These moralists could act and comprehend; they knew how genuine glory was

put on

When, passing through the forest, we come to a noble tree that rises into the air, far above all its fellows, we are tempted to stand still for a moment to admire it, surprise being naturally excited at its magnificence and elevation. When travelling on foot from the monastery of Engelberg to Sarnen, after crossing the Storek, the stranger passed through a forest in which were many trees of a most surprising height; and he remembers that, descending into the Melch Thal, even the goat-herd, who guided him, coming to one gigantic plane, stood still, and, muttering to himself, looked up to its vast summit with an expression of astonishment. "In India there are trees," says Pliny, "so lofty, that an arrow cannot reach their summit 1;" but "if a tree, the branches of which, the oldest as well as the youngest, are striving," as Goethe says, "to reach heaven, be well worthy," to use his words, "of veneration," in the moral forest, the attention of wayfarers is likely to be still more arrested, from time to time, by coming into the presence of those persons whose spiritual growth has not been affected by the confined air of earth around them, and who are true representatives of what Catholicity can produce when its action is unmixed and unimpeded. Among the Capitular instructions at Monte Cassino, in 1273, attention is called to the supernatural elevation of certain virtues observable in the Church. Among things which can hardly endure in the world, they propose the instances of humility with riches and truth, with much energy of discourse. Again, casting a truly indulgent glance at human life, certain virtues, embraced as the sources of greatest happiness in Catholicity, are considered so high above our nature as to constitute martyrdom without effusion of blood. "Such," say these instruc-

<sup>\*</sup> De Sum. Bono, i. 17. ‡ N. H. lib. vii. 2. 
† Par. 30.

tions, "are abstinence in abundance, continence in youth, and liberality in poverty\*." The same appreciation occurs in a homily, written in the Celtic language, of which a fragment has been lately published, from a manuscript of the library of Cambrai. "Every affliction," it says, "in the three kinds of martyrdom is accounted a cross. It is so accounted if one receives white martyrdom, or grey martyrdom, or red martyrdom. The white martyrdom is, when a person parts, for God's sake, with every thing which he loves. The grey martyrdom is, when one parts with his passions in sorrow.—Castitas in juventute, continentia in abundantia. The red is, to suffer slaying for Christ's sake†." Alanus de Insulis says, "that men who practise the supernatural virtues while on earth, are already in heaven.

"Hic habitat, quem vita pium virtusque beatum Fecit, et in terris meruit sibi numen Olympi; Corpore terrenus, cœlestis mente, caducus Carne, Deus vita, vivens divinitas, extra Terrenum sapiens, intus divina repensans. Quem non erexit fastus, non gloria rerum, Non mundi dejecit amor, non lubrica fregit Luxuries, non luvus opum, non ardor habendi. Succendit, non livor edax, non anxia fœdæ Pestis avaritia, non laudis cæca Cupido:

Nec mirum si lætitæ par gratia cunctos, Exspectat, quibus una datur pro munere vita In quibus ipse Deus est omnibus omnia donum Et donans, dans uni plurima, pluribus unum ‡."

As supplying an instance of the impression caused by such characters, when exalted to the highest state of sanctity, on persons pursuing the ordinary roads of life, let us hear the friend of Marina de Escobar, relating the testimony which was given by some who had seen her on their passage. "The excellent Don Alphonso Pimentel, Count of Benavente, whose Christian manners, saith he, I will not speak of, lest I should make his modesty blush, attests, on oath, that he has found the perfection of all virtues in Marina; that, when he visited her, in all his adversities, and in his greatest spiritual struggles, he always found the greatest consolation from her, and the wisest counsels, and that the mere beholding her used to inflame his soul with a love of virtue. The most illustrious Don Francisco Calderon, and Vargas, Count of Oliva and marquis of the seven churches, attests, that he and his lord grandfather used always to revere

<sup>\*</sup> Hist. Cassinensis, viii. 407.

<sup>+</sup> Bib. de l'Ecole des Chartes, tom. iii. 200.

<sup>#</sup> Encyclopædia, lib. v. 8.

her supernatural graces, and that they used never to do any thing without consulting her and commending themselves to her prayers; so that, shortly before his parent was arrested, though the latter knew that his affairs were in an evil state, and that he would be arrested, he addressed himself to the saint, and asked her what he ought to do; and she replied, that, if he desired the good of his soul, he would do nothing; and that he so entirely trusted her, that he waited for his incarceration. The illustrious Don Francisco de Guzman, Viscount of Villoria, concluded his testimony, saying, that he felt convinced that the common opinion repecting her being a saint was true, and that whatever belonged to her should be esteemed as a holy relic, and that as often as he passed by her house he venerated it as a great sanctuary. Don Juan Arias de Rua, of the king's council, said, that no words could convey an idea of her merits; and he concluded, saying, 'I know that those who passed across the place in which she lived and died, used always to uncover their heads on seeing her house, and venerate it as a sanctuary.' In fine, Æmilian de Zupide, who held a high place in the royal chancellery of Valladolid, concluded his evidence with these words: 'When I used to enter her chamber, the venerable and holy lady used to order a seat to be left for me, but I never accepted it, though she would press me; but I fell on my knees, and remained inclined at her bed-side, as before a venerable creature \*.'"

Such are the first general impressions wrought on witnesses by meeting with persons to an extraordinary extent supernaturally good within the Catholic Church. Nor is it necessary to wait for such perfect examples to find the attention of men awakened by observing virtues of this order; for when they are beheld practised, in a much lower degree, in the common intercourse of life, by persons undistinguished from the body of the faithful, they still present the characters of a phenomenon distinct from all merely natural results; and it is not alone the highly educated classes that make such observations, but the attention of every one is more or less attracted. Men and women the most remote from sanctity find that there is something noble in the clear mind, furnished with harmonious faculties, moulded from heaven, -something attractive in the whole carriage of the young man whose character was originally formed by this type. Though the particular individual who represents it before them may seem to descend to be on a level with themselves, having, in fact, become a degenerate specimen, still there is remaining a certain manner and expression which strike them with a new pleasure. Where the contagion of evil has not been experienced

<sup>\*</sup> Vit. Ven. Virg. M. p. ii, lib. iii, c. 4.

all are won by the supernatural morality. All feel a joy to be in any manner employed by such persons as practise it; of whom they will say, like Aurelio's father, "there's no thought which can proceed from you, but which is virtuous; and 'tis a comfort,

and a kind of goodness, to mix with you in any action."

There are trees which are recognized as having a peculiar influence in rendering the air wholesome, which, like the pine, by balsamic emanations conduce to the health of man. are the plants of the moral wood with which we are here con-There is nothing emitted by them which has not a medicinal effect on minds. One perceives that their influence tends to heal, to mollify, to soothe and repair the wounds and breaches of our nature. It is not neutralized by any thing which can discourage or intimidate any one coming upon this road, however far he may have wandered from the centre. These true representatives of virtue have no harsh words for the most unfortunate of sinners walking and familiarly talking with them, with whom they thus converse, not in consequence, as some severe persons will now immediately suggest, of having a romantic turn of mind, and perhaps of wanting faith themselves, but simply from being true Christians, and having inherited the spirit which is commemorated on the most ancient tombs, as in the lines-

> "Hic hominum vitia blando sermone removit, Nec culpis judex, sed medecina fuit."

"The people generally reported our Lord," says Raban Maur, "to be a sweet, benign man, affable to sinners,—affabilem peccatoribus \*."

Further on we shall take especial notice of this signal, which already must excite attention; for we perceive at once what a difference is here between systems and professors of virtue. Anglicanism, on one day of the year at least, formally curses sinners; Rationalism worships them; Catholicity waits upon them, prays for them; and blesses them even when absent, as in the solemn benediction Urbi et orbi, by the common father; and this contrast can be traced in the character of the three descriptions of men who, under these respective banners, profess to follow what is just and right; for the virtuous Anglican, in point of fact, is found to be disdainful and reproachful towards sinners; the Rationalist is alternately the slave and the cruel tyrant of those whom he worships; the Catholic is full of unfeigned humility and familiar gentleness towards sinners, considering himself as one of their company, and perhaps, at the bottom of his heart, as the least to be loved, the least to be respected of them all.

<sup>\*</sup> De Vit. B. Magd. 5.

But we must proceed now to analyze these general impressions, and remark, in consequence, the avenues which are here presented to the centre; and if the stranger should seem drawn on to join in discussions little in harmony with his own life (and this is said not from a wish to talk of his own dear person, even though in a way of disparagement, nor from a desire to be thought virtuous by contending that he is not so, but simply from a desire of not having to answer before any tribunal for the sin of Pharisaical hypocrisy at least), it will be better to hear it said. "This man writes about what he does not practise," and so. as it were, court reproaches, than, after the example of many at present, in order to fabricate a consistency between his belief and conduct, tranquillize his own conscience, and defend what ought not to be defended, study to apparel folly in the weed of costly colours, and, at the same time, wickedly and impiously attempt to disguise the character and detract from the divinity of virtue.

In the first place, for men who know any thing about Christianity, this supernatural elevation proves that Catholic manners are only conformable to the Christian doctrine, which rests upon the principle of Heaven's grace surpassing and correcting human nature, which teaches that "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but," in regard to what Paganism and Pharisaic Jews had known, "a new creature \*."—" Ero quasi ros, et Israel quasi lilium germinabit:" such are the Divine words, proclaiming it †. "Of the Holy Spirit, no philosopher," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "ever made mention: no one seems to have had a suspicion of His existence ‡." All who receive the Holy Scriptures as divine, are supposed to admit His existence and office; but what should awaken attention here, is the consistency of Catholicism, in teaching the doctrine, and in drawing from it the practical conclusions which leave such signal evidence of their application in every department of human thought and of human action that has been subjected to its influence. In the directions given by Alanus de Insulis, for instructing different conditions and states of life, one perceives that, according to the doctrine of which he was only a universal exponent, Catholicism embraces the whole of nature, all its correct points of view, all its duties, all its legitimate wants, and even pleasures §." But then one sees proof no less that there is another side of the medal, on which nature, as it has been changed by a malicious will opposed to the designs of creation, is held up for reprobation. "I find," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "a triple spirit spoken of in the Scriptures-the Spirit of God, the spirit of the world, and the spirit

<sup>\*</sup> Ad Galat. vi. + Oseæ xiv. ‡ In Die Pent. i. § Alani Summa de Arte Prædicatoris.

of the flesh. Cast off these two last that you may possess the first, for they cannot dwell together. If a man be involved in secular affairs, or defiled with unlawful luxuries, the Spirit of God will not enter him \*." Then, addressing one whose manners were not conformable to this doctrine, he demands, "What wilt thou answer, O Christian? The Gentile may reply, 'I knew it not;' the Indian, 'I heard it not;' the Pagan, 'I understood it not :'-but thou, unfortunate, what canst thou reply +?" "As it would not have profited us," says the Abbot Rupertus, "to have been born unless we had been redeemed, so it will avail us nought to have been redeemed unless we be illuminated by the Holy Ghost t." It is not sufficient to act according to nature, as men of themselves understand it. "When Thou, O God, didst say, 'Let us make man,' Thou didst not say," observes St. Augustin, "secundum genus, sed ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram 6." According to the difference between these two types will all things be regulated. Catholicism in philosophy, in morality, and in politics, requires that men should reason, and act in conformity to the latter, rationally, of course, interpreted, and without any exaggerated deductions from it, and hence the contrast between its principles and actions and those of the world, which views only the animal in man, however in that capacity it may seek to glorify him. In consequence of the fall, nature, according to the Catholic philosophy, has come to be below nature in regard to some of its liabilities, and requires correction and elevation above itself. Already these moral texts explain why some, like the stranger, tremble on taking this turn; but we must proceed. St. Gregory says, that, "like the Magi, we must return home by a different way from that which we took on quitting it; we must gain the centre not as we left it:-a regione etenim nostra superbiendo, inobediendo, visibilia sequendo, cibum vetitum gustando discessimus; sed ad eam necesse est ut flendo, obediendo, visibilia frænando redeamus." It seems obvious that, generally, all true adhesion or return to Catholicity must be at the bottom a supernatural as well as an heroic act; in the same way, to use the similitude of Leibnitz. "as if God should wish that a free body should describe a circle in air round a certain fixed point, without any other creature acting on it; which would be a miracle not being explicable by the nature of bodies: for a free body would naturally fly from the curve line by the tangent." Similarly, the attraction of souls by this moral centre, or by Catholicity, is in one sense a miraculous thing, not being explicable, if we take into account all its consequences, solely by nature as it exists. "The coin of God," says

<sup>\*</sup> In Die Pent. i.

<sup>‡</sup> De Divinis Officiis, lib. x. c. 1.

<sup>†</sup> Id. in Ascens. D. i.

<sup>§</sup> Confess. xiii. 23.

St. Bridget, "is golden, bright, ductile, and precious. Thus every soul which bears the impression of God is bright with Divine charity, ductile with patience, precious with good works; but the coin of the devil is gilt and bad-gilt, for it has the likeness of gold; it is hard and flexible, but not as gold. Such is the soul of the unjust-for it seems to itself to be just; it prefers itself to all others; it is inflexible to works of humility; it is soft in its own works, difficult to be bent from its own conceptions, admirable to the world, contemptible to God. It is leaden because it is hideous, soft, and heavy-laden with worldly desires, and yet flexible as a reed to whatever the devil inspires \*." Hypocrisy puts on a holy robe, yet never changeth nature. Catholicism requires and effects a change in all that base, corrupt part of humanity which, whatever surface it may present, is wholly tainted by the serpent.—" Neque enim ædificari potest novitas," says St. Paulinus, "nisi destruatur vetustas +;" and Christians, according to Catholicity, are persons "capaces sanctæ novitatis," as is said on the Tuesday in Holy Week. "Factus sum metipsi gravis," said Job. "This is the war," continues Antonio de Guevara, "which I wage with myself; and this, of all kinds of wars, is the most dangerous to undertake, and the most difficult, since the conqueror in this war is the conquered, and the conquered is the conqueror. This is called a visceral war, being engendered in the heart, and ending in the same heart, in which the arrows are tears, the cannon sighs, and the sciences, the art of giving way to grief. In this war combat love and fear, sweetness and bitterness, abstinence and gluttony, talkativeness and silence, robbery and alms, sobriety and sensuality, idleness and diligence, anger and patience, solicitude and indifference, avarice and generosity, forgiveness and revenge; -and in this wretched war, we combat not together, but alone; not openly, but in secret; not with iron, but with thoughts; not against others, but against ourselves; and, what is most hard, if we wish to conquer, we must let ourselves be conquered. In this war have been engaged all the good and virtuous that have ever been in the world, who, the better they were, have waged the greater war; for in the subjection or victory between sensuality and reason, lies our perdition or our salvation 1."

Of this war speaks Isidore in his book 'de Summo Bono,' saying, "I have so obscured my judgment, and troubled my thoughts, that I know not what I wish, or of what I complain." Of this war speaks St. Bernard, saying, "O good Jesus, how grievous am I to myself!—sad in solitude, annoyed in company, contented with nothing." Of this war speak also St. Jerome,

<sup>\*</sup> Revelat. lib. iv. c. 23. † Div. Paulini Epist. xxvi. ‡ 1 Epitres Dorees, liv. ii.

St. Ambrose, and all the holy fathers, and the good Marquis de Santilana, saying, "in this war I fight against myself;" and again, "since I wage this war, may God defend me from myself\*."

This, too, is described by Regino in the ninth century, concluding his collection of canons with an allocution, alluding to it in these words, "therefore, if hitherto you have been proud, humble yourself in the sight of God. If you have loved vainglory, consider, that you may not lose eternal recompense for transitory praise. If the rust of envy should hitherto have eaten into you, which is the greatest sin, and above all detestable, for it is compared to the devil, who envied the first man on account of the gift which he had himself lost, do penance, and count the proficiency of others as your own. If sadness have vanquished you, practise patience and longanimity. If the disease of avarice have oppressed you, consider how it is the root of all evils, and likened to idolatry, and therefore be liberal. If anger has vexed you, which rests in the bosom of fools, domineer over your mind, and banish this from you by tranquillity of mind. If gluttony should have infected you, be sober; if luxury, be virtuous +." "The interior spiritual senses," says St. Bonaventura, "must be reformed; for against the first impediments, or the corruption of nature, it is necessary that by Jesus, who is the key of David, our senses should be opened before they can experience eternal things ‡." There has been a prejudice, that a man who should be so fortunate as to reach the magnetic pole. would experience there "alcun miracoloso stupendo effetto," as Livio Sanuto says. Be that as it may, Catholicism, where lively faith exists, is a region of comparative innocence, and often of grandeur, which reduces all the morality of rationalists, and all the magnificence of pride, to toys, yet opens to every wretch that has reason the doors of the universe. Faith, like wisdom, "being but one, can do all things; and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new; and, in all ages receiving holy souls, she maketh them friends of God." Then they move as men in whom new love has stirred deep thoughts. "Smiling on mankind, their heart seems reconciled to all things and itself, like a reposing child." The Church is compared to a vine. "Why so?" demands Savonarola, replying, "because it produces wine which inebriates the minds of men with the love of Divine things which rejoices our hearts. Whatever you place at the roots of the vine, is changed into wine. Whether water, or dung, or whatever else you put on its roots, it draws all to itself, and turns it into wine. So whatever you lay upon the

<sup>\*</sup> Lib. ii.

Church, and on a faithful soul, whether mockery, or persecution, or gold, or praises, or malediction, it converts all to

charity, to patience, to humility, and other virtues \*."

This is the state which St. Bonaventura describes as the charitative affection for eternal things; the journey by which the human spirit comes to the intrinsic and secret manor of Truly this is solemn discourse for the stranger to be caught listening to; but thus it is that the lightest are moved at times to hearken. "Love," he says, "surpasses science and intelligence.-Plus enim diligitur Deus quam intelligatur; et dilectio intrat et appropinquat ubi scientia foris stat. Lest the human spirit," he continues, "should mistake the way of natural affection, or of acquired love for the journey of charitative affection, it is necessary to observe how charitative or gratuitous affection differs from natural affection and acquired love. Natural affection is that which any one bears to his own flesh which no one hates—that of a mother to her child, which she can never forget; that of a man to his domestic, without which he would deny the faith, and be worse than an infidel. This requires to be ruled by reason:-for this affection always suggests soft, sweet, and pleasant things, concerned with what is earthly, voluptuous, and delicate, while it flies in horror from what is austere or contrary to its will, so constituting perverse love, and this is born with a man; whereas charitative affection is imparted by God. Carnal affection is twofold; for in one respect it is neither a virtue nor a vice, but a certain habit of the exterior man, inclining the mind-for when one is of a more elegant form, or of a sweeter voice, or more beautiful countenance, he conciliates affection even from strangers. This appeared in Moses, which caused him to be concealed from Pharaoh, and to be adopted by his daughter. This affection does not merit the name of true love, but it is a remote image of true love, and full of anxiety, whereas charitative affection is full of pleasure. Whence Richard says, 'Sicut charitate nihil est melius, ita et nihil est jucundius.' Carnal affection may be also official, which inclines the mind on account of benefits received, and this, though dangerous, must also be admitted. Carnal affection is also rational, which arises from the consideration of any virtue, and as when we are delighted with the merits of the saints. This is more perfect than the former kinds. Yet it differs from the charitative affection, because it arises by the medium of reason from external examples; whereas the latter is inflamed by the Holy Ghost to love even sinners. There is also a carnal affection which is called spiritual, as arising from spirit, either from the malignant or from the human spirit; for from the

<sup>\*</sup> In Ps. Qui Reg. Is.

latter, from an innate ingenuousness, and also from a studious and exercised inquisition there springs a loving affection for the highest good, which closely resembles the charitative or gratuitous affection, from which, however, all these differ—both as to origin and effect—for the latter is imparted supernaturally by God, and its operation is more pure, and fervent, and energetic. This charity, or Divine love, as Rabanus says, is a fire in meditation purifying the mind from the defilement of vices—a light in prayer irradiating the mind with the brightness of virtues; honey in thanksgiving, sweetening the mind with the sweetness of Divine benefits; wine in contemplation, inebriating the mind with joyful delight—and the sun in eternal beatitude, illuminating the mind with the serenest light, and exhilarating it with ineffable gladness in everlasting jubilation\*."

Lorenzo de Medicis used to wear on his finger a diamond which he inherited from Cosmo, set in three colours, with the word 'semper' inscribed round it. "The diamond," he said, "represents man in this life; the three colours, the virtues in which he should shine-faith represented by the white, hope by the green, charity by the red." Such is the supernatural, but yet, as we shall presently see in another sense, the truly natural state to which Catholicism elevates the human nature fallen. "It is a union of contraries," says St. Augustin-"learned ignorance, rich poverty, refined simplicity, joyful sadness, noble obscurity, eloquent silence, timid confidence, busy leisure, contentious peace, insatiable content +. Here," he continues, "is physical science, since the causes of all natures are in the Creator-here are ethics, since a good life is only formed by loving the things that ought to be loved in God.—Here is logic, since truth and the light of the rational mind are only God-here also is the laudable safety of the state; for only on the foundation of faith and concord can it be raised and preserved, where the common good is loved, which is God !."

The supernatural morality of the Catholic religion thus repairs, to a certain extent in man, the image of his Maker, causing his whole existence to shadow forth the perfections of the eternal King, who loves in seraphin as charity; knows in cherubim as truth; sits in thrones as equity; rules in dominations as majesty; reigns in principalities as headship; defends as courage in virtues; strengthens as fortitude in powers; reveals

as light in archangels, assists as piety in angels.

"If faith be pulled up," says Ives de Chartres, "the whole spiritual edifice is destroyed; and hence it is that when an altar,

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin. Æternitatis.

<sup>†</sup> Epist. exxi.

which in the material temple represents faith, has been moved, the whole Church has to be consecrated afresh \*." If you will have the supernatural and heroic virtues which attract men on this road, you must have this deep foundation laid from which they can be raised. The acorn, if you will have oaks, must be buried two inches beneath the ground, whereas it suffices to mix the seeds of the pine with the earth, or even to scatter them on the surface. The heroic virtues, pregnant with every good and every charm, spring from the deep root of a heavenly motive, with more or less of consciousness supernatural.

Whose source is inexpressibly profound
Whither do thy mysterious waters tend?
Thou imagest my life. Thy darksome stillness
Thy dazzling waves, thy loud and hollow gulphs,
Thy searchless fountain and invisible course
Have each their type in me ——."

But who are those actuated by a heavenly motive without guile. impressed with a sense of the supernatural end of man? having their attention so strongly fixed on it that even in youth, when at the greatest distance, as the Egyptian pyramid to travellers, it appears to them with a luminous distinctness, as if it were near, beguiling the length of labour and enterprise by which they are to reach it? Avowedly not the rationalists, and often virtually not their allies. And what a melancholy spectacle do the aberrations of all such persons yield! " If we see a man travelling," says Antonio de Guevara, " or a pilgrim passing in time of snow, braving perilous gorges, woods, and suspicious mountains, traversing parched-up plains in summer, and rushing waters in winter; and if you ask, 'friend, what is the end of your journey, for which you suffer so much pain and labour?' and he should answer, 'truly, my lord, I do not know any more than you the object of my journey, nor why I suffer so much!' would you not conclude that such an innocent wayfarer was mad † ?"

Look at those representing a population separated from the Church. Is it they who keep a supernatural end steadily and practically in view?—Similes sunt hominibus expectantibus-dominum suum? "Yet you must be like men who are practically expecting His coming," says Antonio de Escobar, "that is, whose conduct is regulated by that object, if you would save your soul. Now unquestionably Catholicism trains youth, even while resting on the primrose bank, where natural delights are floating,

<sup>\*</sup> Ivon. Carnot. Epist. 80. + L'Horloge des Princes, liv. i.

while unconsciously it culls time's sweet first-fruits-to live as those expecting Him. How much more, in the stern struggles of maturer life does it keep His advent before the human mind! "The saving the soul," says a modern traveller, "has been made just as primary a consideration in Spain as the curing the body has been in England." No where, as long as the Catholic religion really prevails, are men found to become grossly and permanently insensible and indifferent to losing the glory of creation's work, their soul. On the contrary, it is for saving the soul that all great measures seem ordained. It is for this end that palaces are built, examples proposed, institutions founded, children educated. Recur to historical examples, you find great princes, generals, practical men, lawyers, and soldiers, demonstrating in an unequivocal manner, that this expectation and this wish, whether they formally express them or not, are at the bottom of their hearts. Hear for instance that illustrious François, Duc de Guise, after being mortally wounded by Poltrot, addressing his son, the young Prince de Joinville, and saying to him, "Aye, mon mignon, mon amy, l'amor et crainct de Dieu principalement devant tes yeux et dedans ton cœur; chemine selon ses voies par le sentier droict et estroict, laissant le large et oblique qui conduit à perdition.- Ne te laisse aucunement attirer aux compagnies vicieuses. Ne cherche aucun advancement par voies mauvaises.—Attens les honneurs de la libéralité de ton prince par tes services et labeurs. Et ne désire les grandes charges, car elles sont trop difficiles à exercer, mais en celles où Dieu t'appellera emploie entièrement ton pouvoir et ta vie pour t'en acquitter selon ton devoir, à l'honneur de Dieu et au contentement de ton Roy. Quelque bien qu'il te puisse advenir garde toi d'y mettre ta confiance, car le monde est trompeur et n'y peut être asseurance aucune, ce que tu vois clairement en moy mesme. -Or, mon cher fils, je te recommande ta mère; que tu l'honores et la serves ainsi que Dieu et nature te le commandent. Que tu aimes tes frères comme tes enfants.-Que tu gardes union avec eux. Car c'est le nœud de ta force. Et je prie mon Dieu qu'il te donne sa saincte bénédiction comme je te donne présentement la mienne \*." Catholicism is found by experience to keep men more or less familiar with such motives, so that sooner or later they formally express the sense which they always retained of their importance. The Catholic voice re-echoes the celebrated cry of St. Francis, beginning,-

<sup>&</sup>quot;Magna promisimus; sed majora promissa sunt nobis.

<sup>\*</sup> René de Bouillé, Hist. des Ducs de Guise, tom. ii.

BOOK VI.

Servemus hæc; suspiremus ad illa. Voluptas brevis; pæna perpetua. Modica passio; gloria infinita \*."

St. Thomas of Villanova, commenting on the words, "Ecce ascendimus Hierosolymam," continues, "this is the city to which we ascend—to this joy and this festivity, to this glory we hasten. Let no one complain of the difficulty of the way, but let every one consider the end of the journey and the repose. O how easy and plain the way—that by loving you can come to the place which Laurence gained by suffering! Who is there that cannot love? This is the way, no longer an impurpled ascent, but a royal way. Lo! we ascend to Jerusalem. Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, think of this :- fix this in your heart; and nothing that can happen will be grievous to you: for the memory of Jerusalem lightens all. For what makes the martyrs to endure such torments, but the memory of Jerusalem? What enables the anchorites to live solitary in the woods, but the memory of Jerusalem? What at the present day fills the monasteries, and gives such force and constancy to cloistered nuns, but the memory of Jerusalem? We often find men contemplative endued with power to utter harmonious words,-words that are puissant over hearts, such as the most learned men are unable to imitate. The reason is, that these citizens of Jerusalem have learned to speak its language, while men of the earth can only speak of earth, and the citizens of Babylon go on muttering the Babylonic jargon, always full of riches, and business, and honours †."

Imparting thus to all who accept its influence, a deep impression of having a supernatural end to accomplish, Catholicism provides best for the fulfilment of another obligation resulting from the Christian doctrine, the results of which are observed by all observers; for, when unimpeded, its constant tendency is, to render even imperfect men unworldly, and even, in comparison with many, heroical, unwilling to be conformed to the ambitious world, but consenting to be sweetly, and, as it were, naturally reformed in the newness of their mind. Catholicism fulfils, more or less, in all who partake of its spirit, the conditions involved in the very word Religion, which is composed from 're' and 'ligo,' meaning a holding back, a binding back-the exact converse of the modern term, to go a-head, to keep pace with the progress of impiety, with the spirit of time, with the world. and its theories of glory, and with the passions of envy and ambition, which in each breast are ever ready to respond to

them approvingly.

<sup>\*</sup> Speculum Vit. S. F. cap. 20.

"Keep thyself," says Catholicism more or less, "as a pilgrim and a stranger upon earth, to whom the affairs of this world do not personally belong. Custom is overcome by custom. He that is well-disposed and orderly in his interior, heeds not the strange and perverse carriage of men \*." "Nihil gloriosius est quam a mundo aut mundi amatoribus contemni +." Adolf, Count of Holsate, who became a monk and founder of a monastery, feeling ashamed one day as he met his own sons on horseback, proceeding like great counts while he was carrying a pitcher of milk on his head to the brethren at their work, corrected himself by spilling the milk over his habit ‡. course, was the act of a man who had peculiar obligations; but to despise the world without affectation, and not to grieve at being despised by the same proud world, is the secret art which Catholicism supplies in a certain measure to every one who does not reject its influence. "It is not difficult," it says, "for him to despise the world who has learned to appreciate himself, nor will he ever be indignant at being despised by others, when he has been the first to recognize what his own unassisted nature really is."

On another road we observed with what power Catholicity counteracted the litigious inclination of men, inspiring them with a spirit of detachment from the riches of the world. "I have heard some pious persons say," observes St. Diadochus, "that we ought not to yield to those who would take away the goods designed for our nourishment and the poor; but this is to love one's goods more than oneself; for if we once begin to plead for our own, abandoning the watch over our heart, we endanger our salvation \( \delta \)." This passage, it is true, occurs in a treatise on spiritual perfection; but undoubtedly the Catholic Church, following the example of the prophets of God, admonishes all her children to leave, at least in affection, the world, in which avarice and ambition reign, as is said in the prayer on the vigil of Pentecost, "temporalia relinquere atque ad æterna festinare." In old symbolic paintings, we see a balance let down from heaven; in one scale, flying upwards, are a crown and sceptre, with emblems of other distinctions, which men are endeavouring to reach by stretching up their arms. The other scale contains a soul; it weighs all the rest down, and remains on the ground in solitude. Such is the Catholic estimation of the folly that proves itself averse to the new creature; and all history shows, as well as daily experience, what numbers of men accept it, and

<sup>\*</sup> De Imit. ii. 1.

<sup>+</sup> Drexel. Rosæ Select. Virt. P. i. 12.

<sup>†</sup> Ant. d'Avéroult, Catéchisme Historial, c. vi. tit. 6.

<sup>§</sup> De Perfect. Spiritual. c. 64.

form their lives accordingly. Observe an instance of the change of views which it entails. At the age of thirty, Picus of Mirandula renounced his love of travelling, laid aside his pilgrim's staff, and took refuge before the Divine altars, bidding adieu to the world, to letters, to the Cabal, to all earthly vanities, and passed the rest of his life in prayer, and the exercise of the most austere virtues of the Christian faith. Another example occurs in modern literature: - "no, I have not laid a wager with myself; I am sincere." It is Chateaubriand, in his memoirs from the tomb, who speaks. "This is what has happened to me. Of my projects, of my studies, of my experience, there remains to me nothing but a complete disgust for all the things which the world pursues. My religious conviction, in growing up, has devoured my other convictions. There is not here below a Christian more believing, or a man more incredulous, than myself."

But proceeding from such general observations of the phenomena on this road, let us remark, as the basis of the supernatural and heroic morality imparted within the Catholic Church, the union, more or less intimate, of souls with God; for here, visible even to us strangers on the present road, is a wondrous instance of what indicates its Divine truth. "There are virtues," says St. John Climachus, "and there are mothers of virtues. A wise man will seek rather to acquire the mothers\*." And Catholicism begins by securing them. "Qui Christum vere sequitur," says St. Ambrose, "non præmio ducitur ad perfectionem, sed perfectione consummatur ad præmium;" and by perfection he understands love. Though merely a passing notice can detain us now, we may adopt, as a fitting prelude to the scene that is presented when Catholic guides are heard, the

words of the poet,-

"After new fashion shall these woods to-day Hear love discoursed; and it shall well be seen That its Divinity is present here, In its own person, not its minister †."

"Lex nova," says St. Augustin, "nihil nisi amorem jubet." The new law is promulgated in the parable of the two debtors. The love which it orders is the kiss of the sinner, offering her alabaster box of sweet ointment. Catholicism is comprised in these two things. O! mark it, therefore, whenever it speaks, and with that attention as you would hear an embassy from heaven by a winged legate. "The commandment of Divine love, indeed," as Antonio de Guevara says, "is so very high, that in this

mortal life we can only learn it, and in the next accomplish it; yet Catholicism involves a practical love of God, which ever since the day when Adam tried to hide himself from his Creator, is a supernatural gift. The lives of those who truly embrace it explain the sacred words, "Christ died for all; that they also who live may not now live to themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again \*." "The mystery of Bethlehem," says a modern author, "contains an epitome of all theological doctrine and Christian morality. It is certain that if we were to read all our lives the morality of Aristotle and Epictetus, we should never know as much of the principles of morality as if we devoted a single hour to the contemplation of the stable at Bethlehem." Beneath a crucifix the stranger saw inscribed the lines which express the reasonableness of loving our Redeemer; for, taken from the hymn of the angelic doctor, could be read these words .-

"Se nascens dedit socium,
Convescens in edulium,
Se moriens in pretium
Se regnans dat in præmium."

This realization by the mind of the impressions that ought to result from the facts of Christianity, is the key to unlock the secrets of that Catholic life which Protestantism sees through such a distorted medium, too often misrepresenting, despising, and detesting it. The chief study of the Church, as of all her great preachers, is to impress men, as we read St. Peter of Alcantara always endeavoured to do in his sermons, with a sense of the benefits of our redemption †; that we are only saved by the satisfaction of Christ, is the doctrine which forms the sum of all that is taught by the school ‡. Consequently, gratitude and love become the foundation of the new heroic nature which is beheld within the Church. "As vassals of our Lord," says an old writer, "we must offer, not alone lips and hands, but also our hearts of." Hence the number of those who transfer to Christ that love which Dante heard recounted among suffering souls, when of Provenzano, seeking to redeem his friend, it was related how

<sup>\* 2</sup> Corinth. v. 

\* Marchese, Vit. de St. P. iv. 18.

<sup>‡</sup> D. Bonavent. in iii. Sent. Dist. 20. Alex. Alens. iii. P. 9. 1. Memb. 6, Art. 1 et 2. D. Anselm. lib. i. cur Deus Homo, a cap. 10 usq. ad 12, et lib. ii. a cap. 12 usq. ad 20. D. Thomas, III., P. Q. i., Art. ii.

<sup>§</sup> Le Baron de Prelle, Considérations sur la Vieillesse, &c.

"He fixed him on Sienna's plain,
Nor, for his sake, refused through every vein
To tremble ———\*."

Take but one example. Observe that Raymond Lully, who holds so distinguished a place among the great lovers of the Son of God, to whom, after his conversion, he devoted all the affections of his heart. Behold him seated at the fountain with the hermit, who divined the secret of his mystic complaints, and confessed himself also to have been wounded by the same love. When he saw any writing which did not begin with the sacred name of Jesus, he grieved, and said that the Turks had more love for their false Mahomet, than Christians for the Son of God. When he entered a town, he used to ask where those lived who most loved our Lord? When asked whither he was going, he would reply, "to love." On what he lived? "on love." Where he dwelt? "in love." All creatures seemed to him to invite souls to the love of Jesus,—and the sound of music was sufficient to throw him into an eestasy t.

Thus sincerely could he say with St. Augustin, "Non dubia, sed certa conscientia, Domine, amo te ‡." We read in the Magnum Speculum, that "a certain scholar at Paris, entering the schools of a great master, who explained St. Matthew, and hearing him read 'Diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo,' rose up, and gave signs that he was about to depart; and when asked by the master why he went out, he replied, 'before I hear more, I wish to fulfil what has just been read,' and so going

forth, he entered a religious order §."

St. Gertrude wished to receive nothing unless as from the hand of God. So, when asked to choose between any objects, she used to close her eyes, and take the first which she received, as if actually given by His Divine hands ||. St. Ignatius of Loyola made one of his company repeat—"Volo et nolo non habitant in hac domo." This is not exactly the spirit which the modern opinions generate; they inspire rather a desire to contradict the Divine will on all occasions. Is it a grave, public, or political interest that is in question? The saying is, "the State must oppose the pretensions of the clergy, though all their pretensions may be to make men virtuous by the means that have been Divinely ordained. Is it a private passion at variance with goodness that seeks its gratification by a jest or a studied act, by a literary achievement, or a practical offence? The con-

<sup>\*</sup> Purg. xi.

<sup>+</sup> Marie de Vernon, La Vie du B. Raymond Lulle, 211.

<sup>‡</sup> Confess. x. 6. § Id. 236.

<sup>|</sup> Insin. Div. Piet. i. c. 12.

clusion is still drawn without reference to what may be the Divine will. Catholicism, on the contrary, under all circumstances, in Parliament, or at the domestic hearth, in the council of kings, or in the cabinet of a man of letters, calmly replies in the words of Trithemeus, "Non est bonum nec utile Christiano, sive serio sive joco, contradicere Christo \*." The conformity of wills in the Church to the Divine will, is a fact that plainly denotes the presence of a supernatural influence. In life we behold its operations, while in mystic books we read of the Divine attestations vouchsafed to those who practise it. "On one occasion," says Marina de Escobar, "when at prayer early in the morning, seeing myself appearing before God without affections, or reverence, or love, I said with great grief, Truly, O Lord, I appear before Thee now as an irrational animal before a king, though my soul wishes to come before Thee with the right dispositions. When I had said this, I heard in reply these words, 'My soul, all things which you interiorly and fervently desire I see-and on them I fix my gaze, and in them I am content, though you seem to yourself, in regard to things less internal, to be so tepid; for my eyes and mind always view the more secret recesses of the soul, where are placed that firm will and intimate desire, and true affection. If this root be good, and profoundly fixed, that which is extrinsic and visible of this tree or plant, is not a thing of so much importance,—but it is the hidden root to which I look, as the skilful gardener, who always regards the root of the tree or plant that he has charge of †." The same assurance was given to St. Gertrude. Having seen a flight of angels over the convent, as if assisting at the vesper office, and understood that they besought God to make His worshippers resemble them in virtue, she feared lest she conceived this thought merely from her own understanding, and not from the Divine Spirit; but she received this answer,-"fear not-because your will is so fully united to My Divine will, that it can wish nothing but what I wish, and consequently all angelic spirits are subject to your will; and therefore, though you may have conceived this idea from your own sense, they would seek to fulfil it, even if before they had not so interceded 1."

This conformity of wills with the Divine will, alone would explain all the peculiarities of the Catholic civilization, which prove offensive to so many now. Nevertheless, Catholicism reveals God, not as an arbitrary lawgiver, but as justice itself.—

<sup>\*</sup> Liv. Octo Quæst. ad Max. Cæs.

<sup>†</sup> Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, P. i. lib. vi. c. 12.

<sup>‡</sup> Insin. Div. Pietat. seu Vita ejus, iv. c. 2.

"Juxta voluntatem enim suam facit tam in virtutibus cœli quam in habitatoribus terræ," said Nabuchodonosor of God, on which St. Jerome says, "and this he utters as a man of the world; for it is not that he does what he wishes, but that whatever God wishes is good. Whereas Nabuchodonosor so speaks, that while he proclaims his power, he seems to deny his justice, as having undeservedly required punishment, than which insinuation what can be more execrable?"

Nature, discarding the best instruction, seeks to please men, and to please itself, and it fails in both regards. Catholicism makes it aspire to please God, and it finds that all is included in His love. On the tomb of Bodenstein at Basle were these

lines,-

"Nec omnia, nec omnes mihi
Placuere; quinam ego omnibus?
Non omnibus Cous senex,
Non eremita Spagyrus.
Num tu viator omnibus?
Deo placere cura, abi \*."

Where a spirit opposed to Catholicism reigns, such thoughts do not find expression even associated with death. We read epitaphs stating that the departed pleased their friends, pleased their superiors, gave satisfaction to their general and commander, perhaps, as in the instance in a London temple, where a letter of the great duke is textually inscribed over a grave,—but however amiable and excellent may be the quality which men wish to commemorate by such inscriptions, it must be confessed that supernatural ideas, like those just cited, are best

coming from beyond the tomb.

"We must understand," says St. Augustin, "nullam esse aliam dilectionem, qua quisque diligit seipsum, nisi quod diligit Deum; for he who loves himself otherwise should rather be said to hate himself†." "The eye, while it perceives an object, forgets itself," says Henry Suso, "for by the act of seeing, it becomes one with the object, and yet remains, in itself, what it is. In the same manner can man lose himself in God‡." Catholicism is properly anagogical, an upward action,—"sursum actio," as St. Bonaventura says. Of him who is influenced by it, one may say, "ascensiones in corde suo disposuit in valle lacrymarum." "Since God is above," says the seraphic doctor, "the apex of the mind must be placed above; and this is done when the reason assents to the first truth on account of itself,

<sup>\*</sup> Richebourq, Ultima Verba, &c. + Epist. lii. ‡ De Veritate Dialog. c. 9.

and above all things—when the irascible part leans upon the highest Giver, and when the concupiscable adheres to goodness \*."

As the love, so again the imitation of Christ, which we remark as taking place within the Church, denotes a supernatural power. Of what use is it to deny this supreme kind of virtue, merely because we feel ourselves far from having attained to it? Because we are sinners, it does not follow that other men are not holy and divine.

"We'll let heaven alone, and say nothing."

To hear some philosophers speak, and the sects that are more or less allied with them, it might be supposed that those whom God foreknew, He predestined to be conformable to every image, excepting that of His Son, as the first-begotten of many brethren t. The Catholic Church verifies the sacred text as St. Paul wrote it. Not that there is no recognition of the necessity of an immense difference between the image and the Original, since, as the ancient author whose exposition of faith has been ascribed to Justin, says, "between them in many things there must be a discordance.—Non recte faciunt qui vim adhibent ut sic se habeat exemplum ut prototypum;" says another old writer, "non enim esset jam exemplum nisi haberet aliquid dissimile;" and besides, in point of fact, of course the only way in which we can really imitate that most inscrutable and infinite Essence that made this all, and comprehends His work, to mention whom the whole place, by rights, is too profane, whose only name is Sacred, is by doing good to others; but so far, and in a faint degree, with limitations, in some few other respects it is required, we are assured, that the analogy with Him should exist. Accordingly, with these distinctions received and acted on, those tending secretly to the skies, tend visibly to what is called an imitation of the great model of all goodness. "The book of the imitation," says a French historian, "gained publicity, and became popular in the fifteenth century, but it has all the air of greater antiquity, and of having been long before prepared. It seems a certain fusion of all that was best in each monastic rule. The monastic rules were not merely cloistral codes; they contained moral precepts and religious effusions. The book is stamped with that spirit of wisdom and of moderation which characterize the great order of St. Benedict." The antiquity, indeed, of the whole sphere of ideas which produced it, may be inferred from a passage to this effect in the rule ascribed to St. Jerome. "Non satis est profecto et

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin. Æter.

consummato viro," it says, "opes contemnere, dissipare pecuniam, ac projicere quod in momento et perdi et inveniri potest. Fecit hoc Antisthenes; fecerunt plurimi quos vitiosissimos legimus:—tibi non sufficit opes contemnere nisi Christum sequaris. Te ipsum vult Dominus hostiam vivam, placentem Deo. Te, inquam, non tua\*." So in the Celtic homily of the eighth century, lately cited. On the text, "Si quis, vult post me venire abneget semetipsum," we read, "these are the words which our Lord speaks to every one of the human race, that they banish all their vices and sins; and that they accumulate virtues, and that they take upon them the form and sign of the cross for Christ's sake, while yet they have power of body and soul, that they may follow in the track of our Lord in good deeds; and we follow Him not if we watch not our passions, and if we guard not against our sins †."

"Nothing," says Savonarola, "makes man walk more quickly than a love of the object which is the end of his journey, and a desire of reaching it. Therefore, in the spiritual way, charity, which is the love of God, who is the object and end of our journey, is preferred to all other virtues 1." "Fides initium caritatis: finis autem dilectionis scientia Dei \( \delta \)." "He walks rightly," says Ives de Chartres,-cum aut ea facit quæ Christus fecit, aut evitat quæ Christum evitasse cognoscit ||." mind," says St. Diodochus, "must be devoted to an observance of the holy commandments, and to the memory of Jesus, the Lord of glory ¶." This master of the spiritual life, writing for the perfect, then describes how the work of imitation is carried on. "As painters," he says, "begin by laying in the figure of a man in one colour, but afterwards, by degrees, laying one colour over another, succeed in representing every tint, even to that of the hair; so the grace of God, at first by baptism, reduces man to a primæval state; but when He sees us desiring the beauty of similitude, and standing naked in His studio, then, adding virtue to virtue, like flowers, and transferring the mind from clearness to clearness, He gives to him the likeness of God, so that all virtues are infused into him, and tempered with a certain harmonious perfection, spiritual charity imparting the last and most complete illumination; and then, as the eye contemplates with delight the exact copy of an exquisite picture, so are those beheld with an immense delight who are thus restored to a

<sup>\*</sup> Ap. D. de Rancé, De la Sainteté de la Vie Mon.

<sup>+</sup> Bib. de l'École des Chartes, iii. 198.

<sup>#</sup> Savon. de Veritate Fidei Christianæ, lib. viii.

<sup>§</sup> Evagrii Monachi Sententiæ.

<sup>|</sup> Iv. Carnot. Ep. 186.

To De Perfect. Spiritual. 96.

Divine similitude, being again formed according to their original image \*." Though men in general may be unconscious of such transformation, there are, perhaps, few in Christian times who have not been more or less affected by it. Christ's coat without seam, which was knit and sewn over, is interpreted by Antonio de Guevara as "all the whole Catholic Church, which is so united, and knit, and sewn with her Lord and Bridegroom, that they are become one only thing †." "Man must resign himself," says Henry Suso, "and in a fivefold sense he possesses himself,-in common with stones, and it is called 'esse;' in common with herbs, 'crescere;' in common with brutes, 'sentire;' in common with other men, and that is the rational nature in which all men are one,—fifthly, peculiarly himself, which is personal according to substance and accident. What is it, then, that hinders man from eternal salvation? It is the last, 'sese,' when man turns from God to himself, and sets up himself for God in his heart. This 'sese' must be given up, as also the 'ego' of which the Apostle speaks when saying, 'vivo autem jam non ego, vivat vero in me Christus 1.'" Such are those to whom power is given to become sons of God-truly heroic and resigned men, of whom God is the Father, and who are become united in the one God &. And this is a state, though supernatural, so conformable to the original ordination of the Creator, that brother Giles used to say, "unless a man prepares in himself a place for God, he will not find a place for himself among the creatures of God | ."

"What is it to be two together?" says Rupertus, explaining a sacred text, "unless to have, as a companion, the voice of God in the journey of this life, or on the bed of conscience. David had this companion, and when he fell he was not alone, but was assisted by him, saying, "miserere mei." He was thus raised up, and so to the end of his life did he continue to be aided and comforted by his companion, who never left him \( \mathbb{T}\). Then in another work this holy abbot speaks of the general obligation to love and imitate our Saviour, saying, "this is the necessary order; that first a good will towards the Creator should be excited in the rational creature, by a consideration of his benefits. There are men, nevertheless, ungrateful, who, as they praise not, though they may know Him, so neither, when the charity of God, which spared not His own Son for us, is preached to them, do they return thanks; but they deride, as folly, the

<sup>\*</sup> Id. c. 89. + The Myst. of Mt. Calvary.

<sup>‡</sup> De Veritate Dial., c. 5. § Id.

<sup>||</sup> Bucchius, Liber Aureus Conformit. Vitæ B. Francisci ad Vit. 'J. Christi, 69.

<sup>¶</sup> De Victoria Verbi Dei, lib. iv. 23.

word of the cross of Christ. Let it not appear that we, too, have deaf ears when our Lord cries out, saying, 'Si quis sitit veniat et bibat," which he explained by adding, 'qui credit in me flumina de ventre ejus fluent aquæ vivæ.' He who believeth in Me, is the same as to say, he who thirsteth for Me. For what is it to believe in Christ, unless to thirst for Christ? more to believe in Christ than simply to believe Christ. demons believe and tremble. But to believe in Christ, is walking by faith to tend to Christ, to venerate and to love the Word by which all things were made; and to him who thus thirsts for Him, it will be given to drink of the Spirit of Christ. Oh, from what destitution and poverty is the creature relieved, when with his Creator he is made to have one and the same Spirit, who alone is the abundance of eternal riches, so that rivers of living water flow from it \*!"

Such, then, is the desire of Divine imitation, with more or less of consciousness experienced, which cannot be separated from the other supernatural and heroic virtues that belong to Catholicity, on which we must now proceed to throw a hasty and admiring glance. The love of men, the love of all our kindred in Adam, can be observed to follow, in the first place, as a necessary consequence, and that this affection, too, may be qualified as heroic and supernatural, appears from many considerations.

"Virtus est ordo amoris," says St. Augustin. "Charity," as the angelic doctor says, "is the form and matter of other virtues." "Man being created with ordinate love, and inordinate love being the result of sin, or rather sin itself, it is incumbent on man for salvation," say Catholic theologians, "to repair the violated order of love; and to this end he must multiply the honours due to God, to parents, and superiors; multiply the gratitude due to benefactors, and restore to every one his rights; loving the brotherhood, which includes the poor, the rich, sinners,

and all ment."

The Catholic religion, by the immense stress which it lays on charity and compassion, seeming to sanction the old popular idea expressed by pity in a moral play of the middle ages, saying, "whoso me loyeth, dampned never shall be," produces characters like Allworthy, who, though he would not openly encourage vice, could yet privately relieve the distresses of the vicious themselves, when these became too exquisite. The men, it teaches us to remember, whom the Apostle commends, are those "odientes malum"-very different characters from those hating sinners. The man thus influenced, when he hears of

<sup>\*</sup> De Divinis Officiis, lib. v. c. 8.

<sup>+</sup> Ægid. Gab. Specimin. Mor. Christ. 18.

persons having done ill, will never reiterate those things which might better be forgotten. "They have erred," he will say,—his thoughts always recurring to "the two debtors,"—" because they are of Adam's kindred, and perhaps young: reprehensions they deserve; yet, gentle sir, consider what is the heat of an unsteady youth; what is a giddy brain, green indiscretion, rawness of judgment, thoughts vagrant as the wind, and as uncertain. It is a fault, a capital fault; but he holds that 'twill be nobleness in him not to remember it." He has no other comment on the sins of those who do not conceal their frailty, but the prayer of St. Stephen,-Domine Jesu, ne statuas illis hoc peccatum. He durst not, in the secret depths of thought, exclude any poor despised creatures, from that family pro qua Dominus noster Jesus Christus non dubitavit manibus tradi nocentium et crucis subire tormentum; and for us all, consequently, whatever be our demerits in the estimation of men, he breathes from his soul the prayer of Respice. Thus, without losing the supernatural sense, or rather because he nourishes it, he, as the poet says, takes no private road,—

"But looks through nature, up to nature's God:
Pursues that chain which links th' immense design,
Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine;
Learns from the union of the rising whole,
The first, last purpose of the human soul;
And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
All end, in love of God, and love of man."

Now that such a state of mind, involving qualities that seem so opposite, is supernatural, no one ought to doubt, who reflects on what the human nature-without external and internal aid, whether professing to practise or to neglect virtue-has ever been. "Natural charity, indeed," says St. Diadochus, " is the index of a benevolent nature, yet it can never deliver, the mind from passions as spiritual charity can \*." How often is it found alternating in the heart with jealousy and envy-that hellish vice? We had occasion to observe on other roads the Catholic morality in regard to the duty of loving and serving the poor, looking on them with gentle eyes, and practising to the letter the precept of St. James +: our attention was called to it also, in regard to the duty of respecting every order and degree in the social and political state. All that we then noticed was, unquestionably, virtue of an heroic and supernatural kind. Without recurring, however, to such proofs, let us proceed to observe it as involving the forgiveness of enemies, which must be a virtue supernatural.

<sup>\*</sup> De Perfect. Spiritual. c. 74.

"For mercy is the highest reach of wit,
A safety unto them that save with it:
Born out of God, and unto human eyes,
Like God, not seen, till fleshly passion dies \*."

"In many things," says St. Stephen of Grandmont, "a good and evil man resemble each other. Both can watch, fast, give alms, and practise many other virtues; but a good man can forgive from his heart—a bad man, never †." The world in all ages agrees with the pagan Ulysses, saying,—

— ἐγὼ γὰρ ἀνδρὶ συγγνώμην ἔχω κλύοντι φλαῦρα, συμβαλεῖν ἔπη κακά‡.

It has no scruples in saying with him, that it hates when it is well to hate-

ἔγωγ' ἐμίσουν δ' ἡνίκ' ἦν μισεῖν καλόν §.

It would offer to its friend such a banner as the author of the old romance proposes for Donna Maria de Padilla,—the colour being that of a rival's blood, and the work his tears ||. Goethe supposes inability to hate to constitute one of the torments of the ultimate supreme woe.

— "I suffer the tortures of death, which is vengeful, eternal.

Once, in the times gone by, with a hot fierce hate I could hate thee,

Now I can hate thee no more! E'en this is the sharpest of tor
tures."

Very striking in this respect is the contrast presented by Catholicism, to whose pale we are obliged to allude when wishing,

"To number thee with those Whom patience finally must crown."

Certainly it is a supernatural wish to desire to do good to those of whose faults we feel convinced, as Catholicism requires. "There are corporal and there are spiritual alms," says St. Isidore. "The first are to be given to the wretched, the second to the evil. You will always, therefore, have wherewith to give, since if you have not money, you have grace and forgiveness \( \frac{n}{2} \) "Do you wish to be one of those sheep? Be humble," continues St. Bruno, "and innocent; be patient and gentle. Put off pride and rapacity; hurt no one; injure no one; let

<sup>\*</sup> Lord Brook.

<sup>+</sup> S. S. Grandim. Liber Sententiarum, cap. 75.

<sup>‡</sup> Soph. Ajax, 1323. § Id. 1347.

<sup>|</sup> Damas Hinard, Romancero, ¶ De Sum, Bono, iii. 64.

the poor of Christ live of thy milk, and be warmed with thy wool\*." Such spirits can nourish no hatred, no resentment. "Nothing," says St. Athanasius, "is so contrary, or so exercable to God, as to hate any one†." The poet, therefore, does but echo the voice of Catholicity, when he says,—

"Would you then taste our tranquil scene,
Be sure your bosoms be serene;
Devoid of hate, devoid of strife,
Devoid of all that poisons life:
And much it 'vails you in their place,
To graft the love of human race."

St. John Climachus shows how such sentiments prevailed in the religious communities of his time; for he relates that "if any one spoke ill of his neighbour, the superior immediately ordered him to be expelled from the monastery, saying, 'that it was not just to suffer a visible and an invisible devil to be within it t." Is a monk to remain in a monastery with others whom he cannot agree with? Master Adam, of St. Victor, in his dialogue on the instruction of a disciple, to him who proposes the question, asking, "Visne ut remaneam cum odio?" replies, "Nequaquam, sed cum dilectione, volo enim ut Abel habites cum Cain, ut Isaac cum Ismaele, cum Esau Jacob. Poterat namque tibi prodesse malitia, si tibi non defecerit patientia \( \frac{\partial}{\cupsilon} \) " With seculars," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "it is counted for nothing to be angry; and if they do not take vengeance on those who provoke them they are despised:" but he proceeds to show what a contrast is presented by the supernatural morality of those whose manners he describes, and gives the following example: " A certain prior of our order, a good and observant man, was often harshly treated by his abbot, so that he was tempted not to bear it with as much equanimity as he ought. The Lord, wishing to temper the intensity of his temptation by the example of His own passion, and to show that for His sake unequal superiors ought with an equal mind to be endured, supplied him with instruction in this manner. One night while asleep, he thought that he was carrying a crucifix along with his abbot, he on the right arm and the other on the left. While they held it thus equally, the arm of the cross which the prior held fell from his hand, and the other being erect, the horizontal position was no longer maintained. Then awakening, he said to himself, 'What dost thou, wretched man? Thou dost not carry the body equally with thy abbot, nourishing rancour against him in thy

<sup>\*</sup> De Novo Mundo.

<sup>+</sup> Exhortatio ad Sponsam Christi.

<sup>\*</sup> Scal. Par. iv.

<sup>§</sup> Hæftenus Œconomiæ Monast. lib. ii. c. 2.

heart:' for he interpreted the body of Christ as the community. and the cross, to which brethren by obedience are attached, as the rigour of discipline. Thus the abbot and prior are especially bound to carry the convent, to hold and sustain it, by prayer and discipline and consolation; and if these two should not agree, the body of Christ is not carried horizontally \*." St. Bruno, commenting on the words,—quoniam tu, Domine, es patientia mea, adds, "that is, thou art the cause of my patience; for to be conformable to Thee, I will suffer tribulations patiently +." One evening, St. Gertrude being moved to anger, the next morning before light she had a vision of our Lord, wearing quite an altered countenance from that with which He had ever before appeared to her, and she understood that this strange disturbance of His looks arose from her having given way to such perturbation 1. This standard, signifying unalterable patience, and a spirit of forgiveness that nothing could overcome, is that which all Catholics profess at least to follow; so that even the false Gloucester, wishing to pass for a good Christian, says, in Shakespeare,-

"'Tis death to me to be at enmity;
I hate it, and desire all good men's love.—
I do not know that Englishman alive
With whom my soul is any jot at odds,
More than the infant that is born to-night."

To have diffused this spirit is, with the same painter of old manners, the consolation of a Catholic king, as when King Edward says,—

"And more in peace my soul shall part to heaven, Since I have made my friends at peace on earth."

—— "Brother, we have done deeds of charity; Made peace of enmity, fair love of hate."

To have attained this spirit is the proof of conversion; when each can bear testimony to himself, in words like those of the poet saying,—

" I speak in grief, not exultation; for I hate no more."

To have failed in it is deemed by the old Christian chivalry a dishonourable weakness. And so the Cid in the Romancero, beginning "Tengo vos de replicar," replies to the king, Don Alfonso, "you seem to me to be very weak, having kept so long a resentful memory of the oath I demanded from you."

<sup>\*</sup> iv. c. 18. 

† S. Brunon, in Ps. lxx. 

‡ Insin, Div. Piet, ii, c, 12.

Indeed, in the chivalrous romances, which exhibit often with such fidelity Catholicism in action, we are presented with the virtue of forgiveness raised to the highest pitch of supernatural asceticism. Thus in the "Four Sons of Aymon," Charlemagne pardons the Duke d'Aigremont, who had treacherously assassinated his son Lothaire. And every one is represented as understanding and praising the motives of his action. All present wept. Never had his victories been so celebrated. "O, great King!" exclaimed Naimes, weeping, "were the whole world conquered at your feet, the triumph were less glorious than this you have just obtained." "Oh, Lothaire," cries Charles, "how delightful it is, but how much it costs one to forgive!" Again, when Renaud de Montauban instructs his sons previous to sending them to the court, he says to them, "there is more glory in gaining over one enemy, in compelling him to esteem you, than in conquering ten sword in hand." On a former occasion he had pardoned the treason of the king of Aquitaine, and hastened to his assistance; saying to his brother, who proposed vengeance rather, "Brother, brother, we should be unworthy the title of knight, if we did not take compassion on a man who repents." Such was the Catholic chivalry: and we meet innumerable instances in real history of the same heroic forgiveness. The venerable James de Vitriacus, preaching the cross in Brabant, used to prostrate himself at the feet of many to implore them to be reconciled to their enemies; and we read that he succeeded always\*.

Now this pardon of enemies, and this recognition of the duty implied in it, cannot but strike attention as proofs of the supernatural morality of the Catholic Church. "Quis enim," as Saul, conversant with the fallen nature, says, "cum invenerit

inimicum suum, dimittet eum in viam bonam?"

St. Bonaventura, after citing the words "sicut et vos dimittimus," exclaims, "O beatum proximi debitum!—O blessed trespass of our neighbour! O happy offence, which we may adduce before God for the remission of our own offences and debts. Let us never be sad then, dearest brethren, if men offend us and injure us, if they afflict us or plunder our goods; but rather, as far as is in our power, let us exult and rejoice in such things, yea, let us desire and covet them, since, by pardoning the offences committed by others against ourselves, we may ask for the pardon of our own offences. Doubtless of great virtue and most potent efficacy must be that allegation which the supreme advocate and our judge teaches us to produce †." "It

<sup>\*</sup> Mag. Spec. 243.

is alms," says St. Isidore, "to love one's enemy \*." "He who does not love his enemy," says Peter of Blois, "is a prevaricator of the Divine law; for there is a certain and express decree of the Lord requiring it. And, after all, he whom you repute your enemy, is an enemy to himself, and not to you; it is himself he injures, and not you; for he only serves you to advance you to innocence †."

The Duchess de Liancourt, who used to give money in secret to her enemies, argues with her granddaughter to show the reasonableness and duty of being humble, so as to believe that those who neglect you, in some respects-which neglect, in the estimation of many persons, constitutes the worst of all injuriesare not guilty, or in the wrong t. "Charissime, molestatorem tuum ama," says St. Bonaventura, " nihil mirabilius in mandatis quam diligere inimicos V." Of this marvel, Catholicism leaves no age, and indeed no day or hour, without examples. And so in the song of the Sun, St. Francis broke forth with these words, alluding to them, "Lauderis, mi Domine, propter illos, qui pro tuo amore offensas dimittunt, et patienter sustinent tribulationem et infirmitatem." St. Catherine of Sienna, being hated and persecuted by a certain sister of her order, all her concern was lest that sister should contract sin through aversion for her, and lest she should be the occasion of her fall. Marzucho, who had entered the order of St. Francis, so entirely overcame his resentment, that he even kissed the hands of Farinata de Scornigiani of Pisa, the slaver of his son; and as he was following the funeral, he exhorted his kinsmen to reconciliation with him. Of the same heroic forgiveness, extended by a mother in Sicily to the murderers of her only son; and by another woman, in the province of Naples, who similarly forgave those who had slain her child, Drexelius cites examples ||. He relates, also, the instance of a boy of fourteen, near Toledo, who neither by threats nor promises could be prevailed upon by his parents to disclose the name of the person who had struck out one of his eyes. "When I was a youth," says St. Peter Damian, "studying in Faventia, two neighbours quarrelled, and coming to blows, one blinded the other. The blind man soon after entered a monastery. Subsequently, he who had blinded him, falling sick, was carried to the same house; and when the monks muttered among themselves that it would be indecent to admit

+ Pet. Bles. de Charitate Proximi, c. xxxviii.

<sup>\*</sup> De Sum Bono, iii. 64.

<sup>‡</sup> Règlement donné par une Dame de Qualité à sa petite Fille, art. x.

<sup>§</sup> Serm. ii. de B. Nic.

Rosæ Select. Virt. p. i. 15.

so cruel a man, the other being under the same roof, the blind man besought them to receive him with all charity, and prevailed on them even to depute himself to wait on him, which he

did with all benignity and patience \*."

Cacciaguerras, in his treatise on Communion, mentions a man who endured with wondrous patience the death of his son, aged fifteen years, who was unjustly killed by a certain muleteer, who having asked him to turn his mule aside in order not to crush him, and he not heeding him, took the bridle and guided him straight; when the other fell into a rage, and struck him with such brutality that two days after the lad died of the effects of the blow. "The next day," says this author, "the father came to me; and after confession and communion, said, 'Father, I am more grieved for the sin of him who slew my son than for the boy's death; for this poor man has offended God by a detestable crime, whereas my child, who had been to confession and communion, is gone to Paradise.' This act and answer," adds the narrator, "I could not ascribe to any thing else but to the virtue and efficacy of the holy Eucharist †." Undoubtedly they could not be ascribed to mere nature, which, when unassisted, is unforgiving, and not unfrequently even implacable from cowardice; as when Menelaus says, " It is a folly to spare an enemy when one can kill him, and deliver one's house from fear, -καὶ φόβον οἴκων ἀφελέσθαι !."

The supernatural, and we may perhaps even add the heroic, character of the Catholic morality, appears evident also in its opposition to the licentious school, systematically—not through frailty—impure, and in which pleasure is adored as God. "Whatever we act, whatever we say, aut de lata aut de angusta via est," says St. Paulinus. "If with the few we find the narrow road and a certain subtle path, we tend to life; but if we take the way of the many," not, after all, to be confined to the path of any one transgression, "we proceed to death." Catholicism, which sanctions all that is naturally good and conformable to the ends of creation, prescribes, points out, and enables men to follow, what, in consequence of vice, is called the narrow way. "Multum debes esse fidelis in amore illius," used brother Giles to say, "qui te liberare vult ab omni malo, et qui tibi vult dare omne bonum." Evil includes what is often only falsely supposed to be enjoyment; for where vice affects

them,-

<sup>\*</sup> Mag. Spec. 99.

<sup>+</sup> Ant. d'Avéroult, Catéchisme Historial, i. 743.

<sup>‡</sup> Androm. 520.

<sup>§</sup> S. Paulini Epist. l. ad Celantiam.

"All pleasures are but mere imagination,
Feeding the hungry appetite with steam,
And sight of banquet, whilst the body pines,
Not relishing the real taste of food;
Such is the leanness of a heart, divided
From intercourse of truth contracted loves."

The old philosophy is more rigorous in its language than truth. " Each pleasure," says Plato, " attaches the soul to the body as if with a nail, and makes it corporal \*." No doubt, sin, in the end, is not what it sometimes pretends to be, and what young imaginative persons too often fancy it to be. It proves, on the contrary, in most cases, the thing exactly opposed to what they have before their minds when they fall in love with it; for it involves no sweet and disinterested affection, and no goodness of heart, further than where it is mixed with some quality opposed to itself; and even writers of the world's school acknowledge that "an entire profligacy of manners will corrupt the best heart in the world." Nevertheless, as we are all liable to be deceived, and to make this false appreciation, the Catholic life, notwithstanding its rational indulgence, supposes and involves a combat with many inclinations, and a struggle against many temptations,-pride, however, being the chief of them. "Non enim transit ad summam pacem," says St. Augustin, " nisi qui magno strepitu cum vitiis suis belligeraverit." Theophylactus, therefore, says, that they who convert the enemies of God by doctrine are peacemakers; and Chromatius says, that it is the most sublime part of the office of peacemakers to reconcile sinners and heretics to God. " As when any one in the winter season," says St. Diadochus, "turns towards the east in the morning when the sky is cloudless, and feels the part of his body facing the sun warm, and the others cold; so it befalleth those who are in the beginning of the spiritual operation, when their heart admits partly the warmth of Divine grace, though still combatted by the flesh; so that it appears as if there were two persons in the one individual at the same moment, prompting virtuous and vicious thoughts, as the man we likened these to at the same time is warm and cold †."

Catholicism thus involves that spiritual and moral combat, of which on a former road the occasions seemed really to be prepared in many instances by demons, of whom Cæsarius says, "Cedendo eis confundimur, resistendo meremur, vincendo coronamur‡." Nature itself, as far as it is corrupted, and the world in every form, as far as it infected with pride, has, under this banner, to be resisted. "The real decrees of nature," says

<sup>\*</sup> Phædo.

<sup>+</sup> De Perfect. Spirit. c. 88.

Frederic Schlegel, "stand in constant opposition to the desires of man. Life is a stern struggle between conflicting powers." Therefore the formula of sweet scholastic greeting is that of the old historian, wishing to him, whom he addresses, "in præsenti cum electis labores et certamina, in futuro quietem et exultationem ac præmia \*." Antonio de Escobar cites the instance of St. Augustin and his struggles; for at one time he had the custom of swearing, of which he corrected himself: "Whoever now hears us swear? I struggled against my custom. We shall watch if we fear; we shall fear if we think that we are Christians †." With this fear the world is little troubled; and consequently within its ranks the combat is unknown. The cause, even, does not exist there for a combat. "So long as a man is in a private station," says St. John Climachus, " either a husbandman or a sailor, the enemies of the king will not attack him; but if he receive armour and a standard from the king. and a military post, then they will strive every nerve to destroy Hence the perfect are often tempted ‡." Corrupt nature rejects the standard, consequently the enemy permits it to pass without molestation.

The supernatural combat belonging to Catholicism may strike the attention of man from his youth; for it is presented to him almost in the beginning of life. "Our Lord," says St. Paulinus, "sought fruit from the tree before its season, to teach us that man should at all times bear fruit to God; for the good Lord, who prepares mortal man for immortality, wills that even in this life he should put on a certain likeness of perpetuity—jam et in hoc sæculo vult eam speciem perpetuitatis induere." No doubt, "great wisdom and attention are required in order not to confine the growth of the human plant, by mistaken, exaggerated precautions, while seeking to keep off the parasite and poisonous plants which hasten to dispute with it the juice of the earth and the dew of heaven, not to overload while endeavouring to direct it;"-but Catholicism of itself seems to involve nothing, in this respect, that can justify complaints from nature; and, after all, we must remember, that it is the antagonistic systems which later by developing pride, and ambition, and false delicacy, create and multiply difficulties in regard to the legitimate use of natural pleasures. Catholicism appears to impose no restraint on men unwilling, but what nature requires for its own security, and its own enjoyment. The Count de Maistre remarks even the physical benefits which result from the Catholic discipline; for, speaking of the old Jesuits in France, he says, "They watched over the youth in colleges as you would watch over

<sup>\*</sup> De Restructione Major. Monast.

<sup>+</sup> In Evang. Com. tom. vi. 90.

the sick, with such eyes as you have seen your mother watch over you; and from these schools came young men of robust temperament and of unalterable health \*," stronger and with more promise of long life than if, incipient Galenists, they had turned over all the volumes of your mysterious Æsculapian science, and, in fact, requiring no other doctor but some one who would give them enough to eat and drink. Restraint, no doubt, there was; yet how cheerfully and joyously did this primitive kind of life proceed, when men offered all that they possessed—the poor jewel of their youth, to heaven, and proved by all their thoughts and deeds, that, "from shaven chins never came better justice than from those ne'er touched by razor!" O unconfined restraint! imprisoned liberty! "Magno gaudio me replevisti," says Lanfranc, writing to Gondulf, "quia promissionem in pueritia factam, in juventute adhuc per Divinam misericordiam te servare scripsisti; quam si ad finem illæsam perduxeris, terribilem aliis judicem procul dubio cum magna securitate videbis †." What corrupt nature would lament, seemed thus to him a subject for rejoicing and congratulation. How mysterious is the power of this discipline! how beautiful its form! These lads seem objects of no pity; a thousand blessings dance upon their eyes. "In the St. Marguerite of Raphael, we behold," says Frederick Schlegel, "the triumph of guileless love and glorious beauty, at whose feet the wicked expire unslain." The divinity revealed in the attitude of the saint as, holding the palm-branch in her hand, she treads on the wings of the monster, without even glancing at the creature annihilated by her foot,—the serene countenance of this heroine of the Christian faith, lofty, yet full of individual grace and beauty, the divinity speaking in her bright blue eyes, and the heavenly smile upon her lips, may be proposed as representing the manner and the result of this combat, which can direct beholders to that centre where are dispensed the arms that effect the victory. "Charity is the guardian of virtue !," says St. Isidore; and it is certain that the love of others excludes, while the love of self admits vice. The most selfish are the most depraved. He that loves truly would not take from another to give himself; he would prefer another's peace to his own pleasure; or, as Hortensio says, in Massinger,-

"The height of his ambition is to add strength to the wings of her he loves.

And to mount her higher, though he fall himself into the bottomless abvss."

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres sur l'Education Publique en Russie.

<sup>+</sup> Epist. 51. # Off. lib. ii.

But, dismissing all consideration of details, we may conclude, upon the whole, that, in regard to this virtue in general, the avenue to Catholicism is direct and wide; for every one who has lived, alternately, in Catholic and Protestant countries. must have discovered this secret, that the Catholic religion diminishes temptations, and diminishes the opportunities to sin, which, under the sway of Protestantism, swarm on all sides, and even in the haunts where youth might think that they could never be presented to its eyes and ears. It keeps pure, therefore, the current of men's thoughts; it leaves nature with grace for its companion; it leaves the shade of the green wood to innocence, to the scholar with his book fancy free; it makes virtue. in the house and in the fields, to appear to the whole population amiable, charming, noble, manly, and, in short, that which is right: and oh, what a good is there, my countrymen! If one could say nothing else for Catholicism but that, it would be enough to make every one who has a human heart, who feels that he has a soul amidst his flesh and blood, to pronounce in its favour; for, alas! alas! how dreadful is it to think that men should esteem themselves happy for being wretched; that they should be taught to associate with something contrary to beauty and joy the celestial medicine which heals only those who are willing to receive it; that men should be led by the force of every thing they see, and hear, and breathe, to be slow to the care of their salvation, and swift to the ways of death and captivity, exulting in the worst things, and rejoicing in their ruin; like those who, having drank the juice of certain herbs, are said to perish laughing, -cum risu perire!

Again, the supernatural and heroic stamp attracts attention, as shining in the humility of Catholic minds and manners. Here, also, the foundation lies deep; for Catholicism urges upon every one a lesson similar to that uttered by the mystic voice, which said to St. Catharine of Sienna, "Know what you are, and what God is-you are what is not; and He is Him who is-you are from nothing, and you would be reduced to nothing without His sustaining hand." The philosopher would have men draw pride from self-examination, saying, "Et illud γνωθι σεαυτόν noli putare ad arrogantiam minuendam solum esse dictum, verum etiam ut bona nostra novimus \*." Catholicism institutes it with a different view; and we may remark, accordingly, that its sinful children do not use the language of modern sentimentalists. They do not excuse themselves, adore themselves; but, as in the introit of the mass of St. Mary Magdalen, they cry, even amidst their worst aberrations, "Beati immaculati in via, qui ambulant in lege Domini." Catholicism, in the best

men, seeks to remove all reliance upon personal merits; for, "at the strict judgment," says St. Isidore, "the justice of the just is not secure unless through the Divine piety, that the justice by which any one is just, may be justified by the justifying God\*." Henry Suso observes, "that, to feel one's own defect, to feel that one has nothing from one's self, and, therefore, to see God—is the play of love †." This humility may be witnessed, to cite but one example in St. Gertrude, who rejects all idea of her own deserts, and ascribes every thing good to the benignity and ineffable mercy of her Saviour 1. "Let a person who seeks to be heard by our Lord, endeavour," she says, "after the manner of a bird, to construct at His feet a nest, made of the twigs of his own indignity and the palms of Christ's perfection, in which he may repose by a constant memory of his own unworthiness §." "Sunt quidam," says St. Bridget, "qui operibus suis satisfacere Deo putant pro excessibus suis, quorum omnium error omnino damnabilis est. Quia etiam si quilibet homo centies corpus suum occideret, non posset Deo unum pro mille respondere: . . . ideo illi soli omnis honor exhibendus est, et nulla merita hominum alicujus reputationis sunt apud Deum ||." .But, observing only the exterior expression of this supernatural humility in connexion with morals, we soon are struck with singular contrasts to what the world sees and understands, presenting us each day with worthies that it supposes will make the nine no wonder. "Vaine gloire," says the author of the Ménagier de Paris, "est le denier au déable dont il achète toutes les belles denrées en la foire de ce monde, et les denrées sont les biens que Dieu a donné à homme et à femme. . . . Tous ces biens vend l'orgueilleux au déable pour le faulx denier de vaine gloire ¶." The Catholic, though his noble forefathers may hold up their hands in marble, and kneel in brass, will not take this coin in payment, feeling the absurdity of pride, and knowing, even without having heard St. Gregory say it, "that the appetite of human glory is like a robber who joins company with those travellers who are on the right road, in order to take them by surprise, and slay them."

Catholicism has no tendency to make a man resemble the vain knight in Ariosto, who wears a mirror, hanging from his girdle, in which he may always contemplate himself. "Its type," as Antonio de Escobar remarks, "is the mind of St. John the Baptist, when he said, 'Oportet illumi crescere, me autem minui." Deliverance from self-love and self-esteem, effected partly by a simple observance of the pious exercises required by the

<sup>\*</sup> De Summo Bono, lib. i. 30.

<sup>‡</sup> Insin. Piet. seu Vita ejus, ii. c. 8.

Revelat. S. Brigit. lib. iv. c. 20.

<sup>+</sup> Dialog. c. 10.

<sup>§</sup> Id. iii. 75.

<sup>¶</sup> D. i. a. 3.

Catholic religion, which, sooner or later, are sure to produce an effect upon the character, fashioning it to a humbler tone, and partly by that enlarged view which Catholicism imparts to the intelligence even of the lowest class of persons, is a supernatural phenomenon, which does not pass without observation in the world; where men, themselves undisciplined, often involuntarily will exclaim, with holier observers, "Blessed by God is that soul, whose humility confounds the pride of another, whose patience extinguishes the anger of another, whose obedience silently reproves the insolence of another, whose fervour excites the torpidity of another \*." Of this spirit, a curious example, which needs, however, a benign interpreter, is thus related in an ancient book: "There was a certain monk in the desert of Scethe, who, coming to visit the holy fathers, dwelling in their separate cells in Cellia, and finding no cell vacant, one of the seniors pointed out a habitation to him, telling him to remain in it; but, after some time, finding that all the fathers flocked to him to be edified by his especially gracious words of salvation, this senior felt envy, considering how no one came to himself, so he directed his disciple to tell the strange hermit that he must give up that cell, as he wanted it. The disciple, whose horror of pride seems to have overcome for a moment his sincerity, went and said to him, 'The abbot sends me to your holiness to inquire respecting your health, for we hear that you are sick.' 'Only pray for me,' replied the other, 'as I am, in truth, infirm.' So, returning to the abbot, he said, 'He begs your holiness to allow him three days more, that he may provide for himself another cell.' After the three days, the inexorable senior charged his disciple to go again, and to say, 'Let him begone, lest I should come with a staff and drive him from my cell by force.' The disciple went and said, 'My abbot is very anxious respecting your health, and desires to know if you feel better.' 'Thank thy lord's charity,' replied the other, 'and say, that by his prayers I am relieved.' Then, returning, the disciple said, 'He only prays you to let him remain till Sunday.' But when Sunday came, and he had not left, the senior, taking a staff, inflamed with anger, hastened to the spot; but the disciple begged that he might go before him, to take care that no one should be present who might be scandalized, so, preceding him, he said, 'Lo, my abbot comes to salute you! Go out and meet, and thank him,' who, rising up, went forth, and, seeing the senior, prostrated himself on the ground, and said, 'May God repay you for the cell which you gave me for His love, and place you amidst His saints in the heavenly Jerusalem!' Hearing this, the senior was struck with remorse, and, casting down

<sup>\*</sup> Fausti Abb. Lirinensis Serm. ad Monachos, 1.

his staff, embraced and kissed him, and invited him to eat with him in his cell. Then he asked the disciple if he had truly delivered all his messages, and the other confessing what he had done, the senior prostrated himself at his feet, saying, 'Henceforth be thou my abbot, and let me be thy disciple, since, in consequence of thy acting moderately, with fear, and the charity of God, Christ has delivered my soul from the snares of death \*.' "

Men who thus seek to smooth the asperity of others, and to impart their own virtue to the proud, cannot surprise us by any proof of the humility which reigns within their own breast. Persons once saying to Brother Jacoponus, "When you lived at the Court, we wonder how you could endure to associate with such worldly people," that holy man replied, "Nay, I wonder how they could endure me, and did not expel me." "Thus," adds Bucchius, after relating the words, "in whatever society men find themselves, they should always discover some reasons for concluding that they are the worst in the company +." "Fear not, my dear child, returning in the dark," used a Catholic mother to say to her young son, who is now a holy priest in the West of England; "for remember you can never meet any one worse than yourself." Men will be attracted to a religion of which the fruits are such lessons and such sentiments as these, as wise and practical as they are humble; for, in truth, those who think that they are themselves the representatives of virtue, ought to be very cautious lest they should not, after all, enjoy a monopoly of good qualities. They ought to be very devoted, very frank, sincere, very sweet-tempered, generous, and kind-hearted; for, besides that there is a soul of goodness in things evil, whatever may be their own exemptions, there are others whom they scorn as the representatives perhaps of sin, who, in their unfeigned humility, are all this without pretensions and without hypocrisy.

Catholicism, by its profound comprehension of the whole of things, renders easy the observance of humility; it makes men take positive pleasure in practising it; and the consequence is, that those who admire virtue, perceiving these results, will, sooner or later, acknowledge that there is nothing in the world so favourable to it as the religion which produces them. Truly striking is the unaffected humbleness of mind which it imparts to virtue. Lanfranc says, in a letter to Margaret, Queen of Scotland, "Non sum quod putas, sed sim quia putas. Ne decepta remaneas, ora pro me ‡." St. Isidore recognizes the Divine judgment punishing not other men, but himself. "The

<sup>\*</sup> Ex Lib. Sententiarum Patrum, § 25, ap. d. 402.

<sup>+</sup> Lib. Aureus Conformitat. Vitae b. Pat. Francisci ad Vitam D. Christi, 73. 

‡ Lanfranci d. Epist. 41.

subtilty of Divine wisdom," he says, "as it scrutinizes interiorly the conscience as a witness, so does it apply penalties exteriorly as a judge.-Miserere, Domine, misero Isidoro indigna agenti, et indigna patienti: assidue peccanti, et tua flagella quotidie sustinenti\*." "The obedient man speaks victories; and, lo!" adds Rupertus, "he speaks them with a ceaseless eloquence, an eternal discourse." His best victories are over himself; and so brother Giles used to say, "that he who wishes to have peace and tranquillity, should regard every man as his superior." Pilgrims through the forest, at least if inspired by Catholicity, are not of the spirit of Laïus and his guide, when, proceeding to visit the oracle of Apollo, they met a stranger where the roads of Corinth and Beeotia join. They who, like St. Catharine of Sienna, in a vision, being offered their choice, take the crown of thorns, and reject that of golden sovereignty, are sure to be practically, and on all occasions, little as well as great, when knocking at a door, yielding the wall to another, or conducting affairs of state, supernaturally humble. Don Juan de Mendoza, in Calderon's play of the Siege of Alpujarra, says to Don John of Austria, "As for the origin of this rebellion, it is better I should confess, that my passionate conduct gave occasion to it than that it should be imputed to the severity of the laws. Rather than hearing the government of the king accused, I prefer declaring myself guilty." "Etsi satis clemens sum in disputando," says Cicero, "tamen interdum soleo subirasci †." Such confessions would startle no one now, though uttered by men who professed to teach the best morality; but Catholicism does not exactly take pleasure in them. It is familiar with other results. "O how endurable," exclaims Don Antonio de Guevara, are the vexations that a man supports, in hopes of the promises of God! O how happy is the expectation which has for pledge the truth of God! How secure, and how richly recompensed is that humble patience which is of such long duration !!" "Mieulx vault estre bien patient que bien fort," says a writer of the thirteenth century \( \psi \). Our old dramatists retain the same conviction, showing that "there is an overthrow," as Massinger says, "that will outshine all victories," praying that Heaven may grant their hero patience, and adding.

But he will have a glorious day, since some Hold truly, such as suffer overcome."

Is this the mere language of humanity? No less clearly super-

<sup>\*</sup> De Sum. Bono, iii. c. 1.

<sup>+</sup> De Finibus, ii.

<sup>‡</sup> Epîtres Dorés, liv. iii.

<sup>§</sup> Le Ménagier de Paris, D. i. a. 9.

natural are the great Catholic rules for preserving, by patience, peace; for, without the intervention of what is Divine, who would ever study to do the will of another rather than his own-choose always to have less than more,-seek always a lower place, be subject to all-wish, and pray always that the will of God may be accomplished in himself, and so verify the conclusion, "Ecce talis homo, ingreditur fines pacis et quietis\*?" "Le débonnaire mect partout paix," says the author of the Ménagier de Paris. "He who is of a good nest brings peace every where. Peace conquers all malice and all anger. Without peace no one can have victory. St. Paul says, 'that with peace all other virtues run, but peace runs the best, for it gains the sword.' All virtues combat, but peace conquers; and justice is the armour of peace, which conquers all things. the knight must be armed with justice and peace; and, for this purpose, he must have repentance from his heart, true confession of the lips, and sufficient penance; and if any one of these three things fail, the armour is false, and he who wears it is conquered and subdued, and loses the reward of Paradise †." With examples of this calm and patient virtue, all Christian history, as well as daily life in countries where Catholicity is living, abounds. Observe St. Gregory of Tours, describing Œga, majordomus of the King Chlodoveus, of whom he says, "Plenitudine patientiæ imbutus;" and Chlotharius, "given," as he says, "to patience, skilled in letters, fearing God, a great benefactor of the churches, giving vast alms to the poor, showing himself benign to all, and full of piety 1."

Erchenualdus, too, majordomus of the palace of Chlodoveus, he represents as a man patient, full of goodness, showing a benign, humble will to priests, patiently and kindly answering them, fearing no pride, and serving no cupidity, seeking only peace in his time, that he might be grateful to God,—wise, but with sim-

plicity, and beloved by all \( \delta \).

Such are the examples of Merovingian ages; and every one knows that the same qualities which are sure to excite attention, whatever the world may think of them, whenever they are seen, belong essentially to Catholic manners. The resignation of some minor States, under various calamities and provocations, the remarkable patience of the Spaniards in the common affairs of life, the quiet retirement of the good in France, who can only be drawn on the stage of political agitation by a religious sense of duty, all presenting such a contrast to the spirit and manners of the proud, can be traced to no other source.

Again, that government of the tongue, agreeing so well with

<sup>\*</sup> Imit. iii. 23.

<sup>†</sup> Le Ménagier de Paris, D. 1. a. 3. § xi. 84.

<sup>#</sup> Hist. lib. xi. Append.

the heroic character, and which Catholicism requires and imparts, argues a supernatural tone of morals. In society, the opposition between the Catholic and every other spirit, is never, perhaps, more remarkable, than in respect to the exercise of this control, which induces men often to reply, in true Dantæan style,—

"——Ask not speech from me; unapt Is he to speak, who other will employs \*."

Others challenge, reply, lecture, preach, pray; and as an old writer says, "what they gain by discoursing on holy themes and praying, they generally lose by talking, like Penelope, undoing each night what she had wove during the day." Men of the old discipline alone, generally speaking, have been taught the use of silence. "Bonnes sont les dents qui retiennent la langue." Such was the popular saying of the thirteenth century. "Above all things," says Bede, "avoid idle conversations, censures, and other contagions of an ungovernable tongue †." "Fear not him who maligns his neighbour," says St. John Climachus, "but say in answer to such detraction, 'Rest brother; I daily commit worse faults; therefore I cannot condemn him." "Neque si oculis tuis peccatum videris condemnes, neque illis credas; sæpius enim falluntur et ipsi‡."—"If you should see sin with your eyes, do not trust them; for they, too, are often deceived."

"Soiez taisant," says the author of the Ménagier de Paris, instructing women in the thirteenth century, "ou au moins attrempéement parlant—sur quoy, belle sœur, sachiez que toute personne qui s'eschauffe en sa parole n'est mie bien attrempé en son sens; et pour ce sachez que savoir mettre frain en sa langue est souveraine vertu §." "Calumny indeed," as St. Isidore says, "seeks to have authority for itself, pretending that those who avoid it are to blame, and that it is itself a virtue; but it forgets that if the faults of men are to be reproved, it must be, as Catholicism requires, in the presence of those who commit them, and not behind their backs ||."

In old symbolic painting, the effects of an unbridled tongue are represented by a wheel revolving horizontally, set in motion by the breath of a man and woman, whose breasts are blown upon by demons. From the wheel issue flames which are extending to houses, corn-fields, and castles in the distance.—

<sup>\*</sup> Purg. 23. ‡ Scal. Par. x.

<sup>+</sup> Epist. Bedæ ad Egbertum. § Ménag. de Paris, P. i. a. 8.

<sup>||</sup> Combat. Spir. 7.

"Equid lingua procax et amaro perlita felle Acta Acherontæis facibus rota; Martis Enyo."

Under a different form, the consequences of neglect in regard to the tongue's government are represented by a city with open gates and slain guards,—

"Quid facit, indomito frenum qui respuit ore? Urbem aperit, cæsisque vocat custodibus hostem."

Amidst the modern influence which seeks to depreciate the importance of such lessons, some will be attracted by a feature of which all Christian antiquity recognized the importance. There will be always some who deem it great gain to live remote from that evil speaking which belongs to what is called respectable society, who have no need that fits of sprightly malice should bribe a languishing mind into activity; who can say with the poet,—

"I am not one who much or oft delight,
To season my fire-side with personal talk
Of friends who live within an easy walk.
Of neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight,
And, for my chance acquaintance, ladies bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens ————."

Even independent of the baseness of dwelling on the faults of others, some will perceive that the consequences of uncontrolled conversation are intellectually injurious. "As the door of a bath," says St. Diadochus, "if opened suddenly, gives escape to the heat, so the mind, by means of loquacity, is altogether disturbed and cooled; the tumultuous utterance of a concourse of thoughts, causes it to be quickly emptied \*." "Qui didicerit justitias Dei," savs St. Ambrose, "loquitur verbum Dei, et qui verbum Dei loquitur, otiosum verbum non loquitur. Otiosum verbum est loqui opera hominum-nec solum otiosum, sed etiam periculosum, pro quo rationem reddituri sumus †." So St. Bruno says, "if the eyes do not see vanity, if the ear do not listen to detraction, if the tongue does not utter vain and idle words, we have the true circumcision ‡." All Catholic literature abounds with examples of men so distinguished. "There was a learned man," says the author of Magnum Speculum, "slow in defining, not quick in affirmation, lest he should condemn or praise any thing rashly. So far was he from the custom of those who ever invert things blessed, turning to evil what

<sup>\*</sup> De Perfect. Spirit. c. 70. + S. Ambros. in Ps. 118. ‡ De Nativitate Domini.

is good, that he feared to speak disdainfully of any author, whether living or dead, knowing that there is another judgment which awaiteth all \*." Such is the supernatural gift in respect to speech, which can direct men to the wise discipline that Catholicism involves respecting it.

But while observing these minor signals, we may remark a curious instance of the universality of attraction which Catholicism supplies, extending even to those whimsical, eccentric, but in many respects certainly estimable men, who in modern times have carried this attention to words so far as to refuse to swear even in a court of justice: for we find a bond, like a silken cord, spread out, as if to draw these by certain historic examples, and proofs of a secret and perpetual affinity to the centre at the Catholic Church. "Let there be no oaths," says St. Jerome,-"in omni igitur actu atque verbo, quieta mens et placida servetur; semperque cogitationi tuæ Dei præsentia occurrat +." Notwithstanding the assurance given by the fathers and councils that one could swear in cases of necessity, "There have been always some," says Thomassinus, "with so tender a conscience on this point, through respect for our Lord's words, that they could never be prevailed upon to swear. St. Elov, in the castle of Ruel, after long refusing to swear at the king's demand, burst into tears, and so moved him, that he promised never again to require from him an oath. The first Christians would never swear; and this fervour remained among the monks and clergy who were exempted by the Justinian code from the imposition of an oath 1."

By the Lombard laws, religious men were not permitted to swear. By the imperial laws, in no cause, criminal or civil, could any clerk or religious person be obliged to swear \(\frac{1}{2}\). The Greeks had even more aversion for oaths than the Latins. There was nothing singular, therefore, as some suppose, in the privilege conferred by Garcias, King of Narvarre, on the monastery of Fitero, in the diocese of Pampeluna, which was a branch of Morimond, when he decreed, that, if cited in judgment, these monks should be heard on their simple deposition, without being required to take any oaths ||. But while Catholicism thus evinces an affinity for sentiments of this kind, which can at least excite the attention of those who adopt them without authority or discretion, as parts of religion, it will satisfy judicious minds by providing safeguards against their indiscreet and exaggerated application; for it is not permitted by the Catholic religion to

<sup>\* 400. 

\*</sup> S. Jerome, Ep. iii. lib. i.

<sup>‡</sup> Thomassin, Traité des Jurements, ii. c. 2.

<sup>§</sup> Goldast. Consuet. Imp. ap. Id. &c.

<sup>||</sup> Dubois, Hist. de l'Abbaye de Morimond, 117.

say, that all oaths are unlawful. In 1240, the Council of Tarracona condemned those "qui dicunt in aliquo casu non esse jurandum."—The words of our Lord being thus interpreted by the canon law, "quod amplius est, a malo est: a malo quidem non tam culpæ quam pænæ," that is, they are required by the

consequences or penalty of sin \*. Again, the supernatural character of Catholic morality can be witnessed in the influence which it exercises over every kind of action, including in one all virtues. The Stoics, it is true, said that "virtues are so united, that he who has one has all, because they all spring from the same fund of reflection; but however they may be admired, for adopting such a speculative view of human duties, in point of fact we know that they rejected experience in proposing it. Here, however, facts support the theory; for the supernatural virtues of Catholicism are found co-existing. Its holiness grows with justice, its purity with humility and a spirit of indulgence, its gravity with sweetness. "In the world, men," as Socrates said, "are often courageous through fear, temperate through intemperance +." They are as often "rogues in grain, veneer'd with sanctimonious theory," holy through injustice, moral through pride, or sullen hatred; for, as Socrates adds, "they only renounce one pleasure through fear of losing another, of which they are the slaves." The only money of good alloy for which men should change every other, is the virtue which emanates from that good and heroic will which leads sooner or later to Divine faith. With that they buy every thing, courage, temperance, justice-sweetnesswhile without it, they are in great danger of possessing only the virtue which results from the mutual interchange of passions, which is only an imaginary virtue-servile, inconstant, without strength or truth. St. Athanasius says, that "chastity itself, and contempt for the world, are only necessary as instruments for the attainment of justice;" and that "it is useless to possess the two first, if the last be not obtained ‡." In old books, life is represented as a wide and impetuous river, in which some who are seen endeavouring to pass it with various loads are swept away, while others strip and swim across with ease. St. Francis explained this vision to brother Leo, saving, that "the river is the world, and that those alone who are unburdened by its cares -having thrown off not one part only of its incumbrances, but all of them, pass it with safety \"." As the foundation of the whole character, the intention from which all heroic and Catholic virtue springs, will be recognized by every one as supernatural. "Non quid quisque faciat," says Alanus Magnus, "sed quo

<sup>\*</sup> Corpus Juris Canon.

<sup>‡</sup> Exhortat. ad Sponsam Christi.

<sup>+</sup> Phædo.

<sup>§</sup> Spec. Vit. S. Fran. ii. 46.

animo faciat considerandum est; fructus enim operis totus con-

sistit in simplicitate intentionis \*."

"You have an example in daily life," says St. Thomas of Villanova, enforcing the same lesson. "You have a labourer in your vineyard, and you give him silver; you have a painter or a sculptor, and you give him gold. Which do you recompense most, the quantity or the quality of the work? So is it in regard to our spiritual wages. We shall be recompensed, not in consideration of the labour, or quantity, but of the will, the value of which consists in charity." "In the tabernacle of God," says St. Augustin, "the two cherubins look at each other, and turn their countenances to the mercy-seat, to show whence they derive that mutual charity +." From the same fountain wells the high and manifold virtue which we witness here. "The man of virtuous soul commands not, nor obeys," says a poet of the sophist's school. Well, St. Odo seems to sanction the first clause, saying, "every proud chief, or superior, falls into the crime of apostacy as often as he takes pleasure in commanding over men with his exclusive power; and he is an impious leader who, by the example of vanity, shows the way of error 1." But from obedience, we are told, Catholicism can dispense no one; and here the opposition and falling off, of nature, at least, as sophists represent it, is most perceptible. Cottle says of Coleridge, that "he was a most charming, delightful character, but that somehow, if a thing were ever presented to him in the light of a duty, he lost all power to perform it."

Such is the tendency of nature with us all. Whereas the Catholic virtue combines spontaneous goodness with a sense of the obligation of obedience. It manifests its divinity in both: inspiring the will, and, at the same time emanating from a resolution to obey, it proclaims that its origin and its power are supernatural. No doubt its virtues are a voluntary offering. "It is written, 'Voluntarie sacrificabo tibi,' that is," adds St. Thomas of Villanova, "I wish no one to be baptized against his will, no one forced to worship. Let him who desires approach spontaneously. Our Lord says, 'Si quis vult venire post me.' Thou invitest; thou dost not force; thou callest without compelling §." But nothing is found to be more binding than the supernatural, or heroic sense of duty; nothing stronger than the

power of that love from which it originates.

Again, Catholic virtue seems to be supernatural and heroical in its exemption from the judgments that are the mere result of circumstances. It was not, after all, a Protestant noble, or a rationalist philosopher, who said, "Je me retire ordinairement

<sup>\*</sup> Alani Mag. de Sex Alis Cherubim, iv.

<sup>§</sup> De Uno Mart. iii.

devant les prospérités." The root of such a plant lies deep; it extends, too, in all directions. "Domine," cries the good thief to our Lord upon the cross. To be Lord, one must be free. Christ was nailed to the tree, and yet he called Him "Lord." "Truly," adds Antonio de Guevara, preaching before the Emperor Charles V., "whenever I think of the faith of this man, I am seized with fresh admiration." Yet, how many resemble him in the Catholic Church, calling Lords those whom the State nails to the cross, and the proud reading public in its representatives, in its journals, in its reviews, and in every form that constitutes an organ for its expression, pursues with mockery? In the world, thoughts and actions are often as the occasion or the fashion wills; a poet says,—

"Know thou this, that men are as the time is."

Therefore, writing to Don Francis Cobos, commander of Lyons, counsellor of the Emperor Charles V., Antonio de Guevara says, "Let not the favours you enjoy efface from your memory that you are a Christian, and that you should proceed in all your actions more by reason than by opinion. For, all the misfortune which is in the court consists in this, that one nation goes after another nation, and one people follows another people, and one opinion another opinion, while I never see one reason follow another reason \*." Catholicism, again, must strike observers as being supernatural in the certainty which it imparts to the judgment respecting what is, and what is not, virtue. It proposes, with authority, certain types and models of virtue which men have not to question, but to follow, saving with the poet, who seems to have foreseen our age,—

"We may not think the justness of each act Such and no other than event doth form it."

"Since the Creator alone," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "has a perfect knowledge of His own works, and that it is He alone who comprehends them fully, each one ought to be esteemed precisely according to the Divine judgment respecting him, and not otherwise; he alone being praiseworthy who is praised by God. Now we read in the Gospel that some have been commended by our Lord. Nathanael for his having no guile,—the Centurion for his great faith, Peter for his confession, the Canaanitish woman for her faith and perseverance, and St. Mary Magdalene for having loved much. Here then," continues the Archbishop, "is a most important lesson for us all, since by means of it we know who are to be imitated †." And accordingly we see, on every side within the Church, as it were

from forth Catholics of all times, men distilled out of their virtues. We have the poor man acting like Israel when he said to his sons, "take with you double money, and carry back what you found in your sacks, lest perhaps it was done by mistake;" for on leaving Joseph, after buying corn, they had found the money which they had paid for it in their sacks \*. Those who have resided in France will have observed how frequently acts of this kind are performed there by poor peasants or labourers; the most scrupulous honesty being, in fact, a quality in the lowest that passes almost without notice. On the other hand, Catholicism, far more than any human or political consideration or system, seems to influence the great and powerful, in rendering them careful to subject practically all private interests to a high sense of justice; as when Antonio de Guevara writes from Toledo in 1532, to Don Manso, president of Valladolid, to intercede for one who had a cause to come on before him, and says, "the abbot of St. Isidore is one of my great friends. We were bred up pages together in the same house, and then we were school-fellows and fellow-collegians, so that we are brethren, not in arms, but in letters. He has asked me for a letter to you of recommendation. I therefore beg that · you will befriend him—salva tamen in omnibus justitia, contra

quam neque patrem respicere fas est."

The accomplished, and generally just moralist of ancient Rome, speaking of forcing men to make restitution for egregious wrong, feels himself obliged to add, "Hæc illius severitas acerba videretur nisi multis condimentis humanitatis mitigaretur †;" but in Christian times the liberated galley slave of Spain, Gines de Passamonte, has a less accommodating sense of duties, for he reminds his deliverer that "nobody can be saved, who withholds another's property against his will, and does not make restitution." In the world, language more in accordance with the former is still heard from most illustrious guides of public opinion. "Men," say they, "struggling for future honour, liberty, all that makes life valuable, cannot be blamed for wishing to crush their accusers, thinking any means legitimate which are pronounced legitimate by the sages of the law. Nobody," we are told, "demands from a party the unbending equity of a judge; even a good man cannot be trusted to decide a cause in which he is himself concerned. Not a day passes on which an honest prosecutor does not ask for what none but a dishonest tribunal would grant. It is too much to expect that any man, when his dearest interests are at stake, and his strongest passions excited, will, as against himself, be more just than the sworn dispensers of justice." In relation to public and politi-

Gen. xliii. + Epist. ad Quint. Frat. Præf. Asiæ. VOL. VI.

cal affairs, the principles of the world are similarly lax. "The world," we are told by one who intends not to censure it, "absolves a man in whose view the rules of justice, the sentiments of humanity, the plighted faith of treaties, are as nothing when opposed to the immediate interest of the State." But this language is not Catholic; these characters are not formed by the supernatural or heroic influence of faith. Catholicism lays down the obligation of justice, and permits no one to flinch in declaring its extent. Catholicism, as we observed on other roads, produces men just against themselves; and in the two great elements of all social virtue, in respect for the rights of others, and in sympathy for the sufferings of others, those whose minds are formed by it will never be deficient.

Again, in general, the fact of this supernatural and heroic morality being diffused, more or less, through all classes of men, where faith predominates, constitutes an opening and a signal. That men of learning and high social position can practise noble virtue, the world is ready to admit, but it seems secretly to deny the possibility of those whom it considers ignorant and low surmounting moral trials. "Who could expect," says the author of Hortensius, speaking of the torture applied to slaves, "a poor, illiterate creature to undergo agonies rather than speak what was untrue?" Fielding represents a magistrate as "having too great an honour for truth to suspect that she ever appeared in sordid apparel; and as never sullying his sublime notions of that virtue by uniting them with the mean ideas of poverty and distress." But Catholicism trusts not to the effect of a polite or literary education; it does not, like some English statesmen, deem integrity and honour, even in the magistracy, to be depending on the amount of remuneration that men receive. makes the poor, and illiterate, and those who receive but a very moderate income, what all the learning in the world, and all the advantages of social position enjoyed by the most elevated, can never render them.

It is, within certain classes, again, a very common error to suppose, that this whole order of supernatural views and actions belongs exclusively to religious associations, or to persons selected from the world to be separated to the Church. So, in an old moral play, Lusty Juventus is represented, exclaiming,—

"What, am I bound as wel as the cleargy
To learne and folow his preceptes and lawe?"

It was not, however, reserved for the reformers, when this was written, to be the first to answer such questions rightly. "It is the demon," says Louis de Leon, instructing women in the

world, "who inspires aversion for mystic works, and a desire to criticize them, in order that souls may not make use of them to ascend to God." He, on the contrary, requires his perfect wife to study such books. But what does the world, opposed to Catholicity, say of them? The avowals of our contemporaries are curious. "This book," says a famous author, who leads the hosts that now seek to unchristianize the world, speaking of a manual which is dear to young and old, and admired by the wise and ignorant alike, "written to enchain poor monks in the practice of renouncement, in isolation, in the blind obedience of an idle life,—this book in preaching detachment from all things, the contempt of self, the mistrust of brethren, a crushing servilism, had for its object to persuade these wretched monks that the tortures of this life, in every respect opposed to the eternal views of God upon humanity, would be sweet to the Lord. This terrible book, this book which they have had the audacity to call the imitation of Jesus Christ, this desolating book, which contains only thoughts of vengeance, of contempt, of death, and of despair,"-but it is needless to pursue the citation. We have heard enough to form, perhaps, an estimate of the discernment of Louis de Leon, in tracing the parentage of such effusions. The annals of typography might suffice to show the historical error involved in them. The first books printed in England for the use of the same public that now feeds on newspapers, and "tales of fashionable life," were of a mystical and high ascetic character. With a few relating to romance and chivalry, religious books chiefly form the list. Thus among the productions of Caxton's press we find The Pilgrimage of the Soul translated from the French, Liber Festivalis, or directions for keeping feasts all the year, four sermons in English—the Golden Legend, the Art and Craft to know well to die, from the French-Infantia Salvatoris-the Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ—a book of Divers Ghostly Matters—the Profitable Book of Man's Soul, and many lives of particular saints. At the present day in France, no class of books has such an extensive sale as works of a similar description: for though men may be conscious of not attaining to the elevation proposed to them in such books, so long as they have faith, they will never seek, like demons, to supplant them by their own thoughts.

The morality, then, of all Catholics who are influenced by their religion, whatever be their rank or profession, proclaims the supernatural or heroic type, and the supernatural power which directs and assists them. St. Stephen of Grandmont, conversing with certain cardinals, and saying that he was not a monk, even added these words, which of course, however, he only intended to be understood in a certain sense, "Quamquam

omnes Christiani possunt vocari monachi \*." "The hermits of Egypt and Palestine," says Thomassin, "did not pretend that we should regard them as distinguished from other members of the body of Christ. They thought that they only practised what was required by the Son of God from all His disciples; and the holy fathers, to a certain extent, have held the same opinion, as appears from their sermons and letters to lay men and women living in the world +." Hence Hæftenus shows how St. Benedict seeks to make his disciple a Christian, before making him a monk !. The stranger in his youth, when travelling in Catholic countries, has often been thrown, by the force of circumstances, in company with monks, and even hermits, for the latter can be still found in the woods; and he remembers being often forcibly struck by the manner in which he, though an unknown and very carelessly composed wayfarer, dressed in the light, secular garb of a mere common juvenile, that perambulated for pleasure the forests and mountains, was treated by such holy men; for it was evident that they received him, for all that, as a brother, and as one bound by many of the same obligations that they fulfilled. Was it a fast or abstinence, whether of universal observance, or peculiar to the diocese, that was to be observed, a secret prayer on passing a holy image, an act of reverence to be repeated before some revered memorial of the order to which they themselves belonged, a cross to be saluted, a relic to be kissed, a cemetery not to be left without praying for the repose of souls, a poor man to be relieved, a word of irreverence to be checked, a litany to close the day, or a mass to be heard at its first dawn? They seemed to recognize in an instant that this young stranger at their side was bound to do exactly what they did, that there was no dispensation for him any more than for themselves; and that if they were monks or hermits, the chance comer before them was a Christian.

Hear the ancient rule of solitaries: "These things," it says, "pertain generally to all solitary hermits,—ad omnes pertinent solitarios, et non solum ad eos verum etiam ad omnes Dei servos et Catholicos christianos §." Similarly, much that is contained in the rule of St. Benedict, is not, we are told, for monks alone, but for all Christians: "ut ad eum per obedientiae laborem redeas a quo per inobedientiæ desidiam recesseras li." Accord-

<sup>\*</sup> F. Levesque, Annales Ord. Grandimontis, Cent. 1.

<sup>†</sup> Thomassin, Traité de l'Office Divin et de sa Liaison avec l'Oraison mentale, 1 Part. c. 2.

<sup>#</sup> Hæft. Œconomiæ Monast. lib. iv. 1.

<sup>§</sup> Regula Solitar. xxiv. ap. Luc. Holst. Codex Reg.

Reg. S. Ben. Proem.

ingly, without even a formal recognition of this identity, we find in all ages a sense of the obligation animating Catholics of every class. "Such are the obstacles to the law of God in the state of grandeur," says the Prince de Conty, "that a man of such position cannot have a love of God proportionate to what his state and his vocation require, if that love be not almost equal to that of the martyrs. His love for his neighbour must be as great as his faith, and both as great as those of St. Lawrence, of whom the Church sings,—Sanctitas et magnificentia in sanctificatione ejus\*." Nay, still further, as if remembering what our old poet says,—

"There's but three furies found in spacious hell;
But in a great mau's breast three thousand dwell+,"—

he asks, " Can a man believe, without wishing to deceive himself, that there is any other road but that of constant mortification, to resist the obstacles which encompass a rich puissant nobleman, and make him fall from the vocation of a Christian !?" The instructions generally given, even in the old romances of chivalry, breathe the same spirit. Thus Renaud de Montauban says to his sons, "The slightest faults in persons of no rank are crimes in persons of illustrious origin. Fortune has only lavished her favours upon you that you may distribute them amongst those whom she has denied them to. The title to property does no more give you the right to employ it as you please, than to do as you please with your life. It is not humanity alone which should excite you to good deeds; it is justice. Never make use of a speech calculated to offend any one. Do not think too lightly of harm to another, and never say any: if the evil is public, all know it; if it is hidden, it is then treachery to publish it. Be humble and modest. Love and respect a just man in whatsoever station Heaven may have placed him; and remember that you owe an account not only of your own conduct, but also of that of your friends." Such were the lessons of chivalry. St. Gregory the Great, writing to a certain general, lets us see, by the praises he bestows on him, that this soldier was under the influence of the same impressions respecting the duties he had to fulfil; for he represents him studiously avoiding the society of worldly people, knowing that their conversation would dissipate the sentiments of piety which he had begun to experience. "Quia sæpe animus qui renovari in Deo per compunctionis gratiam desiderat per prava colloquia atque verba iterum veterascit §." Hence arose the custom still prevalent, of admitting lay persons in the world into a spiritual

<sup>\*</sup> Le P. de Conty, Les Devoirs des Grands, xi. † Webster. ‡ Id. xxii. § Lib. xii. Epist. 25.

association with the professedly religious; which initiations sometimes entailed the observance of devotions that certainly wore somewhat of a monastic character. Thus, in an ancient obituary of Mt. Cassino, at the end of the anonymous chronicles, we find inserted along with the names of monks such notices as these :- " Roggerius et Rainaldus milites; Pandulfus miles, Landulfus princeps et monachus." The form of such admissions may be learned from the following document in the archives of the same house: " Nos ex parte Dei omnipotentis et B. Mariæ semper Virginis et B. Benedicti patris nostri et omnium sanctorum et præcipue eorum, qui in hoc sancto monasterio in suis sanctis reliquiis requiescunt, damus tibi partem et societatem omnium benefactorum quæ fiunt in hoc sancto monasterio et per loca nostra nocte et die, in jejuniis, in missis, in heleemosinis, in vigiliis, et in aliis bonis, ut per intercessionem omnium sanctorum suorum et orationes servorum suorum concedat tibi omnipotens Dominus ita custodire vitam tuam, ut in fine possis habere vitam æternam una nobiscum per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen \*." That these privileges involved the practice of certain ascetic observances, can be inferred from another interesting memorial. John Baro de Aimon, a nobleman and general officer in the imperial army, having demanded repeatedly during many years to be received into community of prayers with the monks of Mt. Cassino as an oblat, the Abbot, Nicholas Raygio, after citing his last epistle, congratulates him on the charity of his heart, which gave him such a disposition, and expresses his joy that a man placed in such perils, amidst martial tumults, should be found so after God's heart, looking to Mount Sion, and devoting himself in spirit to the Divine service. Then, having informed him that in presence of the whole community he had been received according to his prayer, he proceeds; "you are entered on a way from which you cannot lawfully now go back ;-ne cum manum ad humilitatis aratrum semel miseris, retro respiciens, aptus regno Dei non videaris. Remember henceforth to celebrate by confession and communion the festivals of St. Benedict, 12th calends of April; St. Scholastica, 4th ides of February; St. Placidas Mart., 3d nones of October; St. Maur, Abbot, 18th calends of February; and of all the holy monks, ides of November, whom you should adopt as your patrons.—Semper præ oculis habeto inter militares turbas, tubarumque clangores, Deum exercituum te vocantem ad induendum arma lucis secundum exemplar quod tibi in Monte Cassinensi monstratum est. Endeavour, then, according to your station, and the condition of the times, to fulfil the rule of St. Benedict, that by the grace of Christ you may obtain at length perpetual peace with all the monks of St. Benedict.

<sup>\*</sup> Hist. Abb. Cassinens, 850,

May the Lord thus clothe you with the armour of faith and charity, which may preserve you to us in safety long \*!" In general, it is obvious that the simple profession of the Catholic religion involves the adoption of views and motives which separate persons expressing them from the Pagan world, whether in ancient or modern times. The language of Catholics, belonging to the commonest as well as the highest class, is not a tongue to be even understood by persons out of the sphere of supernatural principles. The admiral of Catalonia, being in captivity with the Moors, implores deliverance from God, and invokes his holy patron "to treat concerning his ransom and freedom with Him who has rendered souls free." Such is the style even of the Romancero, alluding to him, which begins,-Cien doncellos pide el Moro: and let any of our "philosophers" converse with a peasant lad or maiden, or with any poor pious mother of a family, and he will be presented with words and ideas quite as strange to him. Even the inscriptions and imagery upon ancient sepulchres might be adduced in proof that the supernatural morality was understood as comprising within its obligations persons of every class. In the church of Montserrat, to cite but one example, on the tomb of Don Bernard de Villomarin, admiral of Naples, the reposing statue of the hero is surrounded with figures in niches, representing the theological and cardinal virtues; and this inscription is placed upon it: "Vixit ut semper viveret +."

In point of fact, from the beginning, the life of the centurion -that is to say, the life of faith, combined with a common life in the world-has been perpetuated in the Catholic Church. The supernatural graces, the austerities, even many of the usages of religious orders, were extended to the laity. Thomassin shows that the observance of Advent passed to the laics from the monks, whose piety they sought to imitate ‡. Peter Damian, writing to the monks of Mount Cassino, says, "your observances of the sixth feria, your fast and discipline, have served an example to multitudes of men and women living in cities and villages, whose devotion is so ardent, that if they failed in following those things they would now think that their salvation was endangered, believing, with the Apostle,-si compatimur et conregnabimus §." Peter of Cluny complains that the monks are even exceeded by the laity, who observe abstinence on Saturdays, which the monks of Cluny did not keep. "Abstinent causa Dei ipsi mimi vel lixæ a carnibus omni Sabbatho ||." In extending these exercises to all men

<sup>\*</sup> Id. 1721. Id. xiii. 826.

<sup>+</sup> D. Montegut, Hist. de N. D. du Mt. Serrat, 24.

<sup>1</sup> Traité des Jeunes, c. 23.

<sup>§</sup> Hist. Cassinensis, Sæc. vi. 192. || Lib. vi. Ep. 15.

the Catholic Church, after all, only gave proof of a wisdom which is significative of its Divine truth; for life in the world, by the very order of nature, seems intended to be, at least at certain intervals, an austere life. What condition is more severe than that of a large class of the lower orders, and that of many, too, in the highest station? How many are there in England, among those even who appear far removed from indigence, persons all smiles, and apparently devoted to pleasure, who can have only one meal in the day, and who on many days in the week never taste meat? What vigils and labours have the rich when the hour of calamity sounds to them? Is it not well for all to be, by a certain training of the mind, steeled against privations, or prepared for them? Catholicism only teaches men to accept and sanctify what is established by the law of nature as well as by the law of grace. We witness proof, however, that the obligation of entertaining and practising the supernatural thoughts and actions of religious men, was accepted by persons in the world. Observing, that in the thirteenth century, churches began to be built by confraternities of lay architects, a recent author adds, "happily faith, the forgetfulness of self, all the virtues which give rise and permanence to associations, were still vivacious in the world. Art could then secularize itself with impunity. Besides the spiritual Church, there was a kind of lay Church, in which it could maintain itself, during three centuries, as a mysterious and respected secret \*." When King James II. visited the abbey of La Trappe, after supper he walked round the refectory, reading the inscriptions on the walls. These were sentences against detraction, on the love of enemies, and the forgiveness of injuries. After a pause, he said, "Voilà de belles maximes. Il faudrait les emporter à Saint-Germain; ce sont des règles indispensables pour des chrétiens; tout le monde devrait les pratiquer:" and he ordered them to be copied out, in order that they might be set up in his apartments†. The discipline observed in the house of the magnificent Duc de Guise, Claude de Lorraine, is described as resembling that of a monastery. "Fort modeste en son vivre et en ses habits, et dont la famille sembloit plutost un monastère religieux que la cour d'un haut prince !." Such will be the custom, however disguised, of many houses belonging to persons in the world, so long as the Catholic religion exercises its influence. Marie-Anne Victoire de Bavière, the Dauphine of France, was educated in the Palace of Munich, as in a cloister. At that court, every one rose each morning at six o'clock, heard mass at nine, dined at ten, heard vespers every day, and at

<sup>\*</sup> Vitet, Notre Dame de Noyon, 304.

<sup>†</sup> Hist. des Trappistes du Val-Sainte-Marie.

<sup>‡</sup> René de Bouillé, Hist. des Ducs de Guise, tom. i. 212.

seven in the evening all strangers withdrew\*. Madame de Maintenon, describing the pious manners of the court of France after the death of the queen, says, that "the simple Sundays were observed as Easter-day used formerly to be kept f." Cervantes, whose pictures are all copied from actual life, describing the house of Don Diego de Miranda, adds, that "what pleased the visitor above all, was the marvellous silence throughout the whole house, as if it had been a convent of Carthusians." In fact, St. Gregory, after becoming Pope, regulating his household after the manner of a monastery, had left an example which was still followed in some particulars by persons of every class living in the world.

But, leaving these observations, which may pass as a digression. though perhaps called for by the objections which the moderns are apt to advance against every representation of the old Christian manners, let us proceed to remark, in fine, that the zeal which animates Catholic virtue can easily be recognized as something Divine and supernatural. "Man," says a remarkable writer, "is inclined by nature to mediocrity, and as averse to great crime as to elevated virtue ‡." But when inspired by faith, mediocrity in virtue is not his aim. His character and experience can then be often expressed by the Anthem of Matins, on Maundy Thursday, in the words, "Zelus domus tuæ comedit me, et opprobria exprobrantium tibi ceciderunt super me." Yet from the beginning, we should distinguish the character of the true zeal. To be moderate in opinions, and immoderate, as the selfish would say, in acts of heroism and goodness,-to be indulgent and yielding towards every one while uncompromising with oneself,-to be all on fire and to rush on, as if under a spur, when it is a question of daring, or saving any one, though at the risk of life,-to be cold, reserved, diffident, and backward, when invited to blame, to pass sentence, to consign others in one's own judgment to reprobation,—such is the character of the zeal which is not passionate, but Divine. This zeal is truly significative, and opens a wide issue to the centre, though it is but little appreciated by many: for as an old writer says, "men notorious for extremities find favourers to prefer them, whilst moderate men in the middle truth want any to advance them; as men of extraordinary tallness, though otherwise little deserving, are made porters to lords, and those of unusual littleness dwarfs to ladies, whilst men of moderate stature may want masters." But let us proceed to observe how Catholicism requires and inspires zeal of this kind.

<sup>\*</sup> Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Mme de Maintenon, iii. 1.

<sup>† 28</sup> Sept. 1683.

<sup>‡</sup> Etudes sur les Idées et sur leur Union au Sein du Catholicisme, ii. 228.

Palmieri, in his poem "la Citta di Vita," advanced the condemned idea of the tender and fertile genius of Origen, that our souls were those angels which remained neuter during the revolt of Satan, and which had been sent into our bodies by the Creator, in order that they might decide and take a part between good and evil. The world, as hostile to genius as to virtue—the spirit of time, and human philosophy in every form -would teach them to remain true to this fancied origin; for as we read in the Revelations of St. Bridget, "all who keep silence as to the truth, and dissemble justice, are praised in the world; while they who have a zeal for God, and who manifest it, are despised \*." But the Catholic religion urges them to avail themselves of what is, at all events, a last grace, and take their side now on earth nobly in the great combat; not by the vehemence and energy of their opinions, but by the virtue and disinterestedness of their actions. In the world are seen such characters in regard to Christian duties, as Dante met in purgatory, when it was said to him,

> ——" Behold that man, who shows Himself more idle than if laziness Were sister to him!"

"Speak to him of any supernatural or heroic virtue, he always replies," says an old author, "by citing the words, 'Ad impossibile nemo tenetur:' and so all obligations are eluded. Take the instance of restitution. 'It is impossible,' he answers: but here in truth necessity is mostly from the fault of the thief, who is either greedy, and then the whole world would not suffice to him; or prodigal, and then it would not suffice to his expenditure; or unwilling to labour; or unwilling to remove it by other means, such as by demanding aid †." Speak to him of any high virtue required by his place and vocation, setting before his eyes such examples as the Isle of Scio once beheld, when the Justiniani family gave such a memorable proof of zeal and constancy: it will be much if it even meets with his approval. Secretly or openly, he often adopts what the ancients termed the lazy sophism, regarding all mental or moral acts as useless. Why should he be greatly good, or even practise any virtue? It will be all the same in the end, he thinks. If you proceed to urge him, he will remind you that even among the good, fervour is regarded with suspicion. It is true, fervour alone may be distrusted; and Don John of Palafox, Bishop of Osma, in a charming passage of his spiritual journey, relates an instance. " Fervour"-represented by a young man-" insisted," he says, "that I should enter the palace; but the porter reproved him. I was

<sup>\*</sup> Lib. vi. c. 75.

<sup>+</sup> Ægid. Gabriel. Specimina Moralis Diabolicæ, § xviii.

quite surprised to see how little esteemed Fervour was in this holy house. Discretion declared that I should never enter as long as the youth Fervour was with me, and that she would suffer herself to be slain first. 'Holy Discretion,'I said, 'what harm can this little angel have done that you should be opposed to him?' There was, however, no use in insisting further. The truth was that Discretion would not trust Fervour, observing, that what began with fervour often ended in indifference, or in worse \*." The fervour, however, that bears the supernatural stamp, would not have been repelled so; and this is what distinguishes the Catholic influence.

"Virtus discretionis absque charitatis fervore," says St. Bernard, "jacet†." Nay, "take notice," says Cervantes's Duchess, "that works of charity themselves, if done faintly and coldly, lose their merit, and signify nothing." "The Lord orders every Christian," says Salvian, "to be fervent in spirit and in faith; for so it is written,—ut simus spiritu ferventes. By this fervour of spirit the ardour of religious faith is shown; of which ardour he who has much is proved to be faithful, and he who has it not, is understood to be frigid, and a Pagan‡." This is the spirit

which Dante hears commemorated in Paradise.

—— "Fervent love,
And lively hope, with violence assail
The kingdom of the heav'ns, and overcome
The will of the Most High; not in such sort
As man prevails o'er man; but conquers it,
Because 'tis willing to be conquer'd; still,
Though conquer'd, by its mercy, conquering §."

All Catholic instruction agrees in requiring this holy zeal. "We ought every day," it says, "to renew our resolution, and excite ourselves to fervour, as if it were the first day of our conversion ||." "Let no one grow torpid in the journey of this life," says an old mediæval preacher, "lest he should lose his place in his beautiful country ¶." St. Bonaventura, in describing the ascent by contemplation, lays down no other law but what holds in the ordinary moral sphere. "Whoever seeks," he says, "to ascend to the summit of the mount of God, must never stop to rest by the way. Nam in isto ascensu non quiescere est quiescere; and he who wishes to rest becomes weary, and unable afterwards to ascend well. In ascending a material mountain, the flesh being weak, requires rest; but in ascending the spiritual mountain, because the spirit is willing, the contrary

<sup>\*</sup> Voyage Spirit. + Sup. Cantica Serm. xxiii.

<sup>†</sup> De Gubernatione Dei, lib. iv. 19. § 20. | | Imit. i. 19.

<sup>¶</sup> Hom. D. S. Wigberto.

is required,-namely, that the spirit should not rest; but the more weary it grows the more quickly should it ascend, for it will seem lighter to itself in proportion as it ascends thus. Foolish therefore are they who rest in this kind of ascent for the sake of renewing their strength. If, however, any should be unable to receive this saving, there will be this remedy for them,that at least they may imitate those who ascend material mountains; for they who ascend these, when grown weary, do not descend into the valley to take their rest, but repose where they are, and then, when refreshed, move still upwards; for otherwise they would never reach the summit. Similarly, they can never reach this summit, who one day ascend a little, and when weary descend again to the valley whence they began their ascent, to take their rest in the depths of sin or vanity; but such men must ascend as far as they can, and then rest there, till on the morrow they can proceed still higher up; and in this manner they will eventually gain the glorious summit \*."

How strange to nature's eye is this long-sustained fervour of Catholicism, ever seeming youthful, and as fresh as ever! rendering men, like the charger of the sons of Aymon, that intrepid steed, which appeared more active than ever when doubly laden, which alone in the forest of Ardennes, when the unfortunate knights wandered destitute, had lost none of his vigour,—truly heroic charger, which never tired;—or, to borrow another image from the pages of our old chivalry, causing each man to resemble that Pinaud who could walk three leagues while any other man walked one. "They who long for a

thing," says the Greek poet, "grow old in a day,"-

- οὶ δὲ ποθεῦντες ἐν ἤματι γηράσκουσιν †.

Faith combines patience with zeal, suffering no discouragement arising from delay to cool the fervour of its young desire. It says to each, like Dante's guide,—

"Thou therefore rise; vanquish thy weariness By the mind's effort, in each struggle form'd To vanquish, if she suffer not the weight Of her corporeal frame to crush her down ‡."

Catholicism seems even to impart to men, in this respect, a quality which can be detected in trees; for the degree of energy with which they rise seems to determine their durability. The quicker a tree grows, the longer it will be before its heart begins

<sup>\*</sup> Stim. Div. Amoris, p. iii. c. 4.

‡ Infer. 24.

to decay. If of two oaks one has acquired two feet of diameter while the other has only eighteen inches, the first will prolong its growth and its life more than the second; the want of soil and space which checked its energies from the commencement, giving to the latter a premature old age. So are men of zeal often found to protract their labours beyond the ordinary years allotted to human life. Faith at all events produces an energetic, and vigorous, and sustained struggle. Faith says to every one, in the words of a still living bard,

"---- I hold

That it becomes no man to nurse despair, But in the teeth of clench'd antagonisms To follow up the worthiest till he die \*."

Who is faithful and prudent? The father of the desert who showed the ladder by which men climb to Paradise, replies, "Qui fervorem suum servavit inextinguibilem, et indies usque ad finem vitæ suæ ignem igni adjicere, fervorem fervori, deside-

rium desiderio, ac studium studio nunquam desiit †."

Now, all this is as significative as it is striking; for it points to the Catholic Church as the centre. "You speak to me of zeal" says the Count de Maistre in one of his letters, "there is, there never will be, there never has been, there never can be zeal out of truth. In all separated communions, hatred against Catholics is mistaken for zeal, which is all love; so much so, that it would cease to be if it could hate.—Sects have no contagious force excepting in their commencement, and during the revolutionary paroxysm, which ceasing, they cease to conquer. Catholicism, on the contrary, is always conquering without ever addressing itself to the passions; and this is one of its most distinctive and striking characteristics ‡." The remark of T. Vinius, as related by Tacitus, continues, therefore, to be verified in this sense; for, advising Galba to use delay, he said, "Scelera inpetu, bona consilia mora valescere §."

How could there be zeal without faith? Doubts undermine the energy of man; before those spectres of the mind, fervour cools, and all that can be done is to look at and admire others, though even this at last will not be possible. How many seem wanting in seriousness, or if they be in earnest, how wanting in

the cheerfulness of truth !-

"For fancies, like the vermin in a nut, Have fretted all to dust and bitterness."

<sup>\*</sup> Tennyson.

<sup>+</sup> S. Joan. Climac. Scal. Par. 1.

<sup>#</sup> Lettres, i. 73, 74.

<sup>§</sup> Hist. i. 32.

It has been remarked, that "Shakspeare lived and wrote as if he thought the heavens, and the earth, and all that is between them, to have been created in jest." In one of the most venerable of the English churches that the State now occupies, Anglicanism places this sentiment upon the tomb of another English poet, as if recognizing, if not expressly teaching, that "life is a jest," and that after death every man finds it to be so, as this poet is made to affirm of himself, saying, that "he once thought it," and that "he now knows it to be, nothing else but a jest." It is objected to others, that they seem to see nothing but obligation, and sadness, and penalties; seeming, like the ghost of Andrea in the Spanish tragedy, to be come from depth of underground, exclaiming,—

"These pleasant sights are sorrow to my soul; Nothing but league, and love, and banqueting!"

And it must be conceded, that it would be well to have a reconciler who would not trifle like the player, nor grope in graves, and cast forbidding looks with the mourner, but who would take whole views of things, feel the reality of moral truths, and yet give leave to youth to think it may be praised, and merit it; and who in general would act and write with equal inspiration. Catholicism supplies the admitted want. It makes men heartily in earnest, and it supplies them with food which never turns sour or dangerous. It gives them a noble, practical, and sublime object, which will sustain enthusiasm, and cheerful, charitable fervour to the last. It causes a man to feel that there are higher interests at stake in the world than any thing personal to himself; or it leads him to identify his own with the supreme cause that seems left at issue, exposed to the ungenerous assaults of villany on earth; for each faithful Catholic, though he may be conscious of worthlessness in himself, will say, "the interests of the Church are mine,

That I myself, am to myself not mine Valuing of her."

Or addressing his speech to her, his words might be those of another poet, saying of himself,—

"From the flaxen curl to the gray lock, a life Less mine than yours."

This supernatural zeal and constancy plays a great part, as we have before had occasion to remark, in the ancient dramatic literature of Europe. We meet with instances in our old

English plays, as well as in the tragedies of Calderon. In the Soliman and Perseda, or Love's Constancy and Fortune's Inconstancy, when the Sultan promises to grant whatever Erastus, his prisoner, may choose to ask, the latter replies, "Then this is all I crave,—

That, being banish'd from my native soil, I may have liberty to live a Christian."

When offered the command of Soliman's expedition against Rhodes, he prays to be employed elsewhere in the foreign wars, against the Persians or the barbarous Moor, but not against his Christian countrymen, though by their cruelty he was in exile with the Turks; and when that island has fallen into their power, to one who expostulates with him for not wearing the splendid robes presented to him by the Sultan, he replies,—

"I must confess that Soliman is kind,
But what helps gay garments when the mind's oppress'd?
My heart is overwhelm'd with thousand woes,
And melancholy leads my soul in triumph;
For Rhodes itself is lost, or else destroy'd:
If not destroy'd, yet bound and captivate;
If captivate, then fore'd from holy faith;
If fore'd from faith, for ever miserable;
For what is misery, but want of God?
And God is lost, if faith be overthrown."

Such is the zeal of which this road furnishes so many instances, and which can so easily remind us at present of striking contrasts presented in the thoughts and actions of men who are not Catholically moved. When Cervantes relates the escape of the captive, and his return to Spain with the converted Moor, he represents him saying, that though it was really so, they could not satisfy their minds of the fact, nor thoroughly believe that the ground they were upon was Christian ground. Its being so was what seemed most delightful in their native soil. But take away Catholicism, and men will not be found to trouble themselves much on landing from a ship, to inquire whether it be Christian, or Mahometan, or Hindoo ground that receives them. The truth is, that Divine faith, even an heroic attachment to its memory, changes men's appreciation of most things. It enhances the value of some that were naturally loved; and it deprives others that they once, perhaps, esteemed, of the false beauty which had attracted them. The Catholic is a zealous, practical lover of the whole Christian religion, not the theoretic admirer of a part only. He resembles, so far at least, that Everhard, the parish priest of St. James at Cologne, of whom Cæsar of Heisterbach says, "he was totius Christianæ religionis amator \*."

The house of Lorraine adopted for device a double cross, like that of Jerusalem, to express the zeal which it cherished for the cause of God and of His Church.—" They choose," said Claude Guilliauld, in his funeral sermon on Claude de Lorraine, Duc de Guise, "to bear for their insignia this double cross—qui monstre superabondance de cœur fidèle à la deffense de l'Evangile dont comme Abraham eust augmentation de lettres en son nom pour sa grande foy, ainsi la famille Lorraine a eu augmentation

de signes de croix pour leur fervent zèle †." Every one knows that in ancient times the most honourable titles that could be conferred on kings or kingdoms were such as expressed the fervour with which they cherished Catholicity. "Defender of the faith." "Most faithful." "The Catholic." "Very Christian." Such were the epithets chiefly prized by rulers who, like the Emperor Ferdinand II., would deliberately put their thrones to hazard over and over again, rather than compromise their Catholicity; or like Sigismund of Sweden, would give up a crown which they might preserve if they would renounce the Catholic faith; while each subject thought it the highest boast if he could say, that "he had a soul not like those born among the mallows, but covered four inches thick with the grease of the old Christian." The Spaniards were so delicate on this point, that no secular family would contract any alliance with persons descended from a Moorish, Jewish, or heretical racet. The State itself adopted the language of faith and fervour. Thus the golden Bull begins with these words,-" Omne regnum in se divisum desolabitur; nam principes ejus facti sunt socii furum." Goethe describes his old patron on hearing it cited, shaking his head with a smile, and saying, "What times these must have been, when at a grand Diet the Emperor had such words published in the face of his princes!" Alluding to the forms of a coronation, the same philosopher feels warmed, for a moment, with affection for the old Catholic manifestations of religious fervour. " A politicoreligious ceremony," he says, "possesses an infinite charm. We behold earthly majesty before our eyes, surrounded by all the symbols of its power; but while it bends before that of heaven, it brings to our minds the communion of both."

Whatever may be thought of the forms under which the sentiment was manifested, there can be no doubt that the original source from which they all proceeded, was a fervent desire to magnify the Saviour of the world, and to extend, as far as possi-

<sup>\*</sup> iv. 98.

<sup>+</sup> René de Bouillé, Hist. des Ducs de Guise.

<sup>‡</sup> Hist. de l'Ordre de N. D. de la Mercy, 454.

ble. His love and worship. "Je suis honteux de le dire moimême," said Louis XIV., "mais je donnerais ma vie de bon cœur pour voir tous mes sujets réunis dans le giron de l'Église." He declared that he wished to honour all his subjects of every condition, the lowest as well as the highest, to assist all towards attaining to the perfection which belongs to their especial state, and to reign in the hearts of all, as the incorruptible Judge, and the common father of them all. He sent to the court of Portugal the Abbé de Bourseis for the interest, as he says himself, of the service of God, "ordering him to try all imaginable ways to convert Schomberg, lequel méritoit," as he adds, "sans doute que l'on prit un soin particulier et de sa fortune et de son salut, parce que c'était un homme d'un mérite extraordinaire \*." It is easy to misrepresent intentions, and to blame, with more or less of justice, the actions which ensued; but the question may still be asked, whether any other but a Catholic king would express concern for the salvation of his subjects, and for the salvation of an enemy? whether any king, minister, republic, or people, uninfluenced by Catholicity, would consider the salvation of a contemporary a matter of interest to the State? Catholicism seems to impart to every one, more or less, a kind of apostolic spirit, as if the obligation of assisting men on the road of truth were imposed on all. So, as Massinger, in his Renegado, says,--

"Knights that, in the Holy Land, fought for The freedom of Jerusalem,
———— Have made their helmets
The fount, out of which, with their holy hands
They drew that heavenly liquor; 'twas approv'd then
By the holy Church, nor must I think it now
In you a work less pious."

This zeal in laymen distinguishes all pictures of the ancient friendship. Our old dramatists are full of instances, as where Donusa replies to the Venetian gentleman, who causes her conversion.

"—— O Divine Physician!
That hast bestow'd a sight on me, which death,
Though ready to embrace me in his arms,
Cannot take from me: let me kiss the hand
That did this miracle, and seal my thanks
Upon those lips from whence these sweet words vanish'd,

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<sup>\*</sup> Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Mdme de Maintenon, tom. iv. c. 4. tom. ii. Appendice.

That freed me from the smallest of prisons, Blind ignorance and misbelief ----."

"Quicunque voluntatem haberet," say the revelations of St. Bridget, "sibilandi in aures omnium transeuntium quod Jesus Christus esset vere Dei filius, et faciendo conaretur quantum posset ad aliorum conversionem, licet nulli vel pauci converterentur nihilominus eandem mercedem obtineret ac si omnes converterentur \*." This desire of bringing men to think of sacred things, is represented even by the poets who describe the ancient manners, and ascribed to persons of all classes in the world. An instance occurs in the Orlando of Boiardo during that night when the hero and his enemy, the infidel Agrican, are waiting for the dawn to recommence the battle. It was a beautiful clear night, and the champion of Christendom, looking up at the firmament, said, "that is a fine piece of workmanship, that starry spectacle. God made it all: that moon of silver, and those stars of gold, and the light of day, and the sun; -all for the sake of human kind!" "You wish, I see, to talk of matters of faith," said the Tartar. There are some, probably, who will not be able to read this passage without a smile, awakened by some dear domestic memory; for how many loving natures are there in the Catholic Church, in simple women as well as in learned sages; in little arch sisters, and sweet thoughtful boys, who are every day playing the part of this Christian hero, in the presence of men who are true representatives of this pagan knight, who have "eyes, and see not; ears, and hear not?" Our Lord is called by Ariosto "il sempiterno Amante,"—the Eternal Lover. Within the Catholic Church, even those who pass and look at things from without, must perceive that there is a succession of hearts by which the debt of love, however they may fail in other respects, is supernaturally repaid.

Taking, now, a retrospective glance at what we have been observing, it is, upon the whole, evident, even from these rapid views, that in the Catholic morality there is something more than unassisted nature was ever capable of producing. This itself is a startling fact, and also a most significant fact. Remark how, in a case somewhat analogous, men of reflection appear interested and penetrated with a certain feeling of awe and admiration. "A meteoric stone," says Humboldt, "affords us the only possible contact with a substance foreign to our planet. Accustomed to know nontelluric bodies solely by measurement, by calculation, and by the inferences of our reason, it is with a kind of astonishment that we touch, weigh, and analyze a substance appertaining to the world without." With no less amaze, methinks, ought a philosopher, let him be ever so wrapt up in

<sup>\*</sup> Revel. S. Birgit. lib. iv. c. 21.

matter, to behold, and, as it were, touch and weigh these graces of Paradise, these virtues of angels, these gifts descending from the Almighty Father, which are to be crowned as such in heaven.

"In the forest we admire," as Pliny says, "the eternal duration of the ebony, the cypress, and the cedar; the wood seeming to be incorruptible, as appears from ancient temples \*." In the world, we should still more wonder at the unchangeable soundness of some hearts; at the nobleness, which is inaccessible to corruption; at the generosity which never fails; at the love which seems to bathe souls, while on earth, in the fragrancy of heaven.

What variety, again, in the leaves of trees; and all the while, what strict conformity to certain laws ruling each family of the forest! So it is with these supernatural productions of the moral wood, which are found to vary even in each individual, like the ivy, which, as Theophrastus remarks, from each stalk has leaves of a somewhat different form, and to change, like the trees themselves, from beauty to beauty at each successive stage of their development. Extending its influence even to the exterior manner of manifesting devotion, the supernatural spirit shows itself different in the voice, steps, and countenance, of different nations; the French, in regard to their Catholic appreciations of decorum, being stately and polite; the Italians, quick and mystical; the English, slow and mournful: while devout reverence constitutes the root which determines the form of all these varieties.

In growth, too, we can trace the same analogy; for as the larch, while young, will shoot up three feet every year, so does the virtue that springs from the soil of Catholicism continue to rise with ceaseless and mysterious energy. Points, it is true, there are, in which this likeness fails. The absolute size, and the degree of development attained by trees of the same family, depend on laws which are still unknown to us; whereas, on the contrary, in the moral forest, the cause of difference can be ascertained; for the worth of individuals depends, we know, not upon climate, as Gibbon and Rousseau pretended, falling into an error that even Theophrastus could detect when he observed the variety of characters observable under the same air of Greece, ψπὸ τὸν αὐτὸν ἀίρα κειμένης †; but upon the direction given to—

"That love from which, as from the source, must spring, All good deeds and their opposite."

N. H. lib. xvi. 79.

The gigantic height, again, attained by the trunks of a few trees of the same genus, depends not on soil or climate, but on a specific organization, and inherent, natural disposition, of which we know nothing; whereas, every child who knows its cate-chism, can tell that the moral elevation is determined by the supernatural powers emanating from the Catholic Church, through her sacraments, her doctrines, her institutions, and through the influence arising from contact with the virtuous within her communion.

For trees, moreover, there are zones and climates beyond whose limits they cannot pass without degenerating. juniper in Virginia rises pyramidically, and becomes a great tree. The European juniper is but a shrub, and it is only by artifice that it can be elevated to a rank above creep-For men, on the contrary, no such limits are assigned. Catholicism can produce the same moral results in every region of the globe. Its power shows itself independent of climatic influences. Or we may say of its virtuous men, that they flourish like the cypress, which, though found in warmest countries, attains to the snow on the mountains of Crete \*. That some trees are found exclusively in certain localities, is a fact which cannot be explained by reference to soil, thermic relations, or meteorological phenomena. We know nothing of the conditions which determined the original distribution of trees and plants; but why the supernatural virtues should cease at a range of mountains, a narrow channel, or the course of a river, abounding on one side, and wholly unknown on the other, is a problem that is involved in no such difficulty. It can be solved by reference to the presence or to the absence of the Catholic religion; for there is the sun that brings into existence, and brings to perfection, these beautiful and glorious reflections of supernal grace. These men, heroically just, heroically good, whose nature is more than nature, whose humanity is more than human, are produced by faith. These lights are but reflections from that luminary which the Church keeps ever kindled.

> "Look, then, how lofty and how huge in breadth Th' eternal might, which, broken and dispers'd Over such countless mirrors, yet remains Whole in itself, and one as at the first+."

We gaze with admiration at actions emanating from those minds inspired by faith,

<sup>\*</sup> Theophrast. de Hist. Plant. iv.

each

According to the virtue it conceives Differing in love and sweet affection,"

We are amazed at the variety of forms which the same principle assumes, at the multiplicity of deeds corresponding to all human wants that result from it; though these flowers of virtue, in number and diversity, are like the plants, of which we may not know the third, or even the fifth part, that exist upon the earth. Already upon this globe, beholding what is on every side, we can experience some of Dante's feelings when he said,—

"So round about me, fulminating streams
Of living radiance play'd, and left me swath'd
And veil'd in dense impenetrable blaze "."

Yet, in conclusion, what should attract observers most is the unseen power itself that worketh—the vital force of Catholicity; of which we may say, in relation to the just and generous, the holy and heroic, whom it inspires,—"quemadmodum stellæ in radio solis, sic istæ in virtutum splendore ne cernantur quidem †." It fares with each as with the star of morning,

"Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Its intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we scarcely see, we feel that it is there."

A celebrated traveller has composed a work entitled "Aspects of Nature." Let him who follows the road of virtue prepare a book of the aspects of grace, and he will find, that at every stage or turning of the moral progress, it is Catholicism which is, as it were, his natural bourne: and, in fact, let any one unprejudiced, calmly reflect whether it be possible to conceive a virtue fit for man, from his mother's lap to the tottering steps of his old age, of which Catholicism would not be the most fruitful parent, the most careful nurse, the most intelligent preceptor, the most heroic instigator, the most constant and faithful friend. Let him reflect whether, of all dutiful, generous, and heroic actions, as well as of all sweet and engaging habits, it be not the most effective principle, the surest protection, the safest rule, the most powerful encouragement. Let him place his hand on his breast, and say whether any other source of virtue can be imagined, so elevated in its motives, so productive and practical in its effects, so glorious in its memories, and so full of promise for all

future generations.

There are, in the world, other sources, other systems of moral philosophy, each proposing a different basis, different motives, and very often leading to actions of a different form and tendency. There are thus temples in every grove, inviting all who pass to hear the contradictory doctrines respecting virtue that are preached within them; but if the answer to the above questions be clear, as with consideration it needs, I think, must be, then our wanderer has only to repeat, in reference to himself and to his own wants, the words which are found in the acts of St. Silvester, putting an end, as far as he is concerned, to all further search,—"Templa claudantur, et Ecclesiæ pateant."

## CHAPTER V.

THE ROAD OF FALSE ASCETICS.



HIS is the place where dangerous obstructions interpose themselves, rendering the way painful, and causing many, even through discouragement, to forsake it: for now it will be said by some who meet us, that after all, the writing set up at the last turning was ambiguous, and that the signal we have been observing was

not sufficiently definite,-

"Lo, who is this that hitherward doth walk, Let us stand still to hear what he will talk?"

The object of his addressing us will be, to suggest doubts as to the direction of the last road. "You are deceived," he will say, "respecting it: for looking up this long avenue, which terminates, as you say, at the Catholic Church, we think that we perceive its antagonists as well. Catholicism stands not alone in claiming to itself a supernatural morality. Does not almost every sect separated from it pretend, by its formal teachers at least, to possess a system of morals derived immediately from a Divine wisdom, and from the Bible? And besides, within the pale of Catholicity itself, how many strangers passing can be repelled and justly moved in a contrary direction from what you

deem the centre, by witnessing the very qualities and deeds that are presented sometimes as being supernatural?" So the objection is twofold, it being suggested first, that men of all religions profess to practise a Divine virtue; and secondly, that what is said to be Divine in the Catholic morality, is often an action, or a series of actions unentitled to respect or love. Well, then, let us sit still, and examine whether indeed this ambiguity exist, and whether the view before us be thus indefinite.

In the first place, then, attend and say whether all that we have hitherto remarked can be explained by the supposition that Catholicism only pretends to cast a supernatural halo round virtues, which can be referred to mere unassisted nature as to their origin, or even, perhaps, traced to vice assuming a different form to satisfy itself. Taking into account all that can be gathered from witnessing a false asceticism, of which, no one, as we shall soon observe, attempts to deny the existence, few probably will answer in the affirmative. Well, then, the whole difficulty, thus presented in a double form, admits of a very simple solution; for it is easy to discover that Catholicism is not responsible for the defects of those who reject its influence, whether avowedly or secretly; and so, though it be a disagreeable, and, one might say, an invidious task, calculated to grieve even these trees that never did us any harm, we must proceed, both to carry the war, as men say, into an adversary's territories, and to unmask false or dangerous friends, stripping naked, as far as both are concerned, a pretentious and hypocritical morality, showing that "all that glistens is not gold," in the spiritual as well as in the material order, whether without or within the sphere of Catholicism; and that the genuine stamp of a supernatural origin, of which we have seen undoubted instances, cannot be observed upon the thoughts and deeds of men, either succumbing to the passions of a very defective nature within the Catholic Church, or wilfully and personally rejecting its authority, from whatever source they may pretend, or think to derive them.

"The pearl of great price," says St. Bruno, "is not found every where. It has its own specific locality, and even there it is not to be gained without labour. The way, also, which leads to it, is long and difficult. Many robbers, many perils, deserts, beasts of various kinds, are to be encountered on it; and the road itself, which leads to the spot, is most narrow. Blessed is he who comes to the prize, and who can gain it. This is the pebble which the Lord promises to give, as we read in the Apocalypse,—Vincenti dabo calculum candidum et in calculo nomen novum scriptum quod nemo scit nisi qui accipit \*." Similarly

<sup>\*</sup> S. Brun. Exposit. de Confessoribus, ix.

St. Paulinus, speaking of this road, says, "it is very rare and difficult to find proper guides for the journey:-quin etiam multi hac ire se simulant, et per diversa errorum diverticula ad viam multitudinis revertuntur. Ideoque timendum est, ne quos duces recti hujus itineris habere nos credimus, eos comites habeamus erroris \*." "The way," says St. Bridget, "is narrow; there are in it many sharp thorns; it is also rocky and unequal. You must, therefore, be strongly clad, and firm in holding your hands before your face; that is, you must be clad with patience and constancy, and have before your eves the commandments of God, and the passion of Christ †." Hugo of St. Victor, no less insists on the dangers of the forest for those who are pursuing it in this direction; for he says that "the snares of hunters, from which the soul has to flee, are not confined to the luxuries of the carnal life. He finds no less dangerous the fallacious deceptions of demons, and the subtle deceptions of heretics, which snares," he says, "are placed, not in the field or on the broad way, as the first, but in the path and on the road, the path being the narrow, the road the wide way 1."

In fine, Alanus de Insulis describes the difficulty of the way

in these lines referring to it,-

"Difficilis conscensus ad hanc facilisque recessus; Accessus paucis, casus patet omnibus, in quam Vix aliquis transire valet, valet omnis ab illa Declinare via, quæ paucis pervia multis Clauditur, arcta nimis virtuti, larga ruinæ. Non huc nobilitas generis, non gratia formæ, Non gazæ dejectus amor, non gloria rerum, Non mundanus apex, non virtus corporis, audax Improbitas hominis, præceps audacia tendit: Sed solum virtus animi, constantia mentis, Factaque nobilitas, non nata, sed insita menti, Interior species, virtutum copia, morum Regula, paupertas mundi, contemptus honoris §."

Such are the warnings given; and, in point of fact, all who pass can witness daily proof that there are persons, affecting to be supernatural in their manners, pretending to have found the pearl, to have kept the straight, narrow way with true guides, to be impenetrable to the thorns, and to have escaped the snares laid for the perfect, who all the while miserably deceive themselves, bring dishonour on the name of sweet religion, and

\* Div. Paulini Epist. 1.

‡ Hug. à St. Vict. de Bestiis.

<sup>+</sup> Revelat. St. Birgit. lib. iii. c. 2.

<sup>§</sup> Alani de Insulis, Encyclopædia, lib. v. c. 1.

cause many to blaspheme the cause that is so blindly or malig-

nantly betrayed.

Some trees and plants, by receiving culture, become worse instead of better. This remark of Theophrastus\*, may be extended to men. There are persons whose natures seem deteriorated by the kind of religious cultivation which they have received, and who, wanting the true soil exemplify what the historian of the trees observes,— $\delta\lambda\omega_S$   $\delta\dot{\epsilon}$   $\pi\dot{a}\nu$   $\tau\dot{\delta}$   $\pi a\rho d$   $\phi\dot{\nu}\sigma\nu$   $\dot{\epsilon}\pi\kappa\dot{\nu}\nu\dot{\delta}\nu\nu\sigma\nu$  †.

Treating on the diseases of trees, he says, that "wild trees have no maladies absolutely and necessarily fatal, whereas many diseases are incident to trees that have received culture, some common to them all, and others confined to a few races t." In reference to the moral forest, such is the conclusion of our missionaries, when they compare the spirit of ignorant tribes, who receive with joy the tidings of salvation, and the obdurancy of diseased races that have been long civilized. Perhaps even without leaving Europe the analogy can be observed to hold in regard to different classes, and to different individuals of each class. In those parts of a forest that have been cut, grow many bushes of black and white thorns, of hazel nuts, juniper, holly, eglantine, and briars, all which present a wild and savage aspect, but a great resource; for they have not been touched by the cattle, and they cover within them young oaks and other trees, sprung from seed which in time get the upper hand. This remark of the forester can be extended to the spiritual tract around us. The process of clearing the soil may have been injudiciously conducted, to the detriment and ruin of these virtues, which in due time would have been perfected. A rude and total clearance of the natural underwood, with all its pretty blossoms, does not involve the prospect of any thing precious to succeed. Of that we may be quite sure.

To all men of common sense it is evident, that there is often great self-deception incurred upon this road; "for there are persons who make it appear," as Petrarch says, that "the soul may sometimes recover each of its passions under the contrary veil." St. Augustin says, "that vice is sometimes removed by vice, as the love of money by the love of praise; and that sometimes persons avoid one sin only to give place to more sins, as when a man who used to get drunk becomes miserly and ambitious \( \tilde{\text{upolicy}} \). Some men are most to be feared when they seem to practise virtue. When Otho began to dissemble his luxury, and refrain from pleasures, adapting all things to the decorum of

<sup>\*</sup> De Hist. Plantarum, i.

<sup>‡</sup> Lib. iv.

<sup>†</sup> Id. iv. § Epist. xxix.

imperial dignity, Tacitus says, "Eoque plus formidinis adfere-

bant falsæ virtutes et vitia reditura \*."

How much more repulsive than simple outcasts, is a numerous class of persons whose virtues can all be traced to pride and egotism, all the realities of whose respectability being things that nature's unsophisticated eye would loathe and detest! It is not their cold, sour conversation, or their stiff, supercilious habits, which can impart that power to reform youth.—

"At which the wizard passions fly, By which the giant follies die."

"Some latent vices frequently appear," says St. Isidore, "when

other vices cease †."

The vice of disquietude wishes to pass for the virtue of solicitude, and slowness in acting well for deliberation ‡. "Avoid the exchange of sins," says a renowned solitary. "Do not convert into passion what is given to destroy passions, lest you should rather irritate Him who giveth grace.—Ne in passionem mutes quod ad delendum passiones datum est §." Undoubtedly, many need such counsels. You show men, professing to possess and practise supernatural virtues, who talk of prayer, of repentance, of faith, and of the new birth, oftener than Catholics; for "truth hath better deeds than words to grace it." You show also great multitudes, professing truth as well as error—

"All relygyous men and demure women;
Ryall prechers, sadnes, with devocyon,
True buyers and sellers, and almes-dedes cryers,
Counscyllers that be of synne destroyers,
Mourners for sinne, with lamentacyon
And good ryche men that send bad folke to pryson,
True wedlocke is there also,
With yonge men that ever in prayer do go;"

but watch these virtues of this great company, one by one. Where is the "pacyence and mekeness" of Catholics? "I have been in their family," says an old writer, who personifies the evil that flourishes in his own separated camp, and that can be found, unhappily, elsewhere, "and I know that they are such railers at their servants, and so unreasonable with them, that these poor creatures neither know how to do for, or speak to them; and, in fact, it would be better to deal with a Turk than with them ||." The poor tribe of Dmoai, whom Chateaubriand,

<sup>\*</sup> Hist. i. 71.

<sup>‡</sup> ii. 35.

<sup>†</sup> De Sum. Bono, ii. 3. § S. Nili Capit. de Oratione, c. 8. || Bunnyan.

when ambassador in London, would so indulge, that he describes himself, on one occasion, as taking charge of the house key himself, in order to let them have their day's amusement at Richmond, have much to relate which can throw light on this subject. There have been youths, too, tempted to commit suicide by the harshness of masters and mistresses, who seemed only to leave praying to recommence scolding and finding fault, so that, as Lady Jane Grey said of her condition, in presence of her parents, "Whether they speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go, be working, waiting, or doing any thing else, they must do it, as it were, in such weight, measure, and number, even so perfectly as God made the world, or else they are so sharply taunted, and so cruelly threatened, that they think themselves in hell;" and all the while, with these requirers of perfection, where is the obedience of Catholics? "If spiritual pride," says another observer, "venom, violence, contempt of superiors, and slander had been the marks of orthodox belief, our schismatics were always the most visible Church in the Christian world." While St. Gertrude was praying once for an unresigned impatient person, and asking why she was tried in a way so little suited to her disposition, she heard our Lord reply, "Ask her what troubles would suit her best; for, as no one can obtain the celestial kingdom without troubles, let her choose those that she thinks she can bear best, and then let her be patient." By which words she understood, that the most dangerous kind of impatience is that when a person thinks that he could bear patiently other afflictions which God does not send, but that what He does send, surpasses his force of endurance \*. Such, nevertheless, is the spirit often manifested by men who, whatever be their profession, are not Catholically disciplined; while again, their impatience, in regard to whatever in the least opposes their will, breaks out every where. It is related of a certain Scotch poet, whose inability to bear contradiction became at last sensible to himself, that one day he formed a resolution to subdue his passion. The day passed as he had proposed; but the control was more than he could longer endure, so that night, as he lay in bed, restless, and suffering from the effects of his late struggle with himself, hearing the watchman proclaim the hour, and add that it was a fine night, he started up, rushed to the window, flung it open, and loudly contradicted him with reproachful epithets, and then, as if relieved from an intolerable burden, returned to his bed, and slept with his usual tranquillity. Thus it is with human remedies for the temper; but Catholicism supplies a continued will and a sustained energy to subdue all moral diseases, while the pre-

<sup>\*</sup> Vita ejus, iii. c. 72.

BOOK VI.

tensions opposed to it produce virtue only by fits and starts. and not always this with certainty, since often there is not even a temporary concealment of the natural bias. "Much may be guessed at the man," says a keen observer, speaking of a literary opponent, "by the framing of his title, which is A Short Answer to a Tedious Vindication, so little can he suffer a man to measure, either with his eye or judgment, what is short, or what tedious, without his pre-occupying direction;" and from hence is begotten this "modest confutation against a slanderous and scurrilous libel, his purpose being to rub the forehead of his title with this word 'modest,' that he might not want colour to be the more impudent throughout his whole confutation." Solon says, that "if it were not for the winds, the sea would be the most peaceable of the elements;" and, in like manner, it may be said, that if it were not for provocations the minds of these men would present the calm which Catholicity inspires. What, again, is the humility of these counterfeit ascetics—"born in the land of vain glory," as an old author says, "and going for praise to Mount Zion?" It is not to each of them that we can apply the line which occurs on the epitaph on St. Gregory the Great-

## "Implebatque actu quidquid sermone docebat."

It is their actions which rather proclaim the truth of what the Pagan observed of his contemporaries, saving, "Nulla est tanta humilitas, quæ dulcedine gloriæ non tangatur\*." Touched with the desire of glory are these persons on every occasion; and so from the secret root of pride spring all these eccentricities of character, all these whims respecting every concern of domestic life, which so often render the falsely ascetic house bitter to its inmates, unapproachable or ridiculous to strangers. As Paulus Æmilius, after all his modest discourses, put up his own statue at Delphi, in place of that of Perseus, so these men, as in Scotland, abolish festivals instituted for the glory of God, and establish anniversaries in honour of themselves. The style of Cato characterizes the whole class of persons that we have in view; for we read that, with all his austerity, he loved indirectly to praise himself; so that when men committed any fault, he used to say, in their excuse, "They are not Cato's," or, "they are but bungling Cato's." Now, in what manner Catholicism appreciates such a spirit, may be inferred from the following narrative, which is found in the Magnum Speculum,-" William Bishop, of Lyons, relates that, there was a certain brother, in a monastery, addicted to incessant talking, who, on being admonished by his

abbot, became as fond of silence as he was before of words, and in consequence made a great progress in sanctity, so that God revealed to him many secret things. It happened once that a certain hermit, in a neighbouring wood, fell sick, to whom the abbot, taking with him this silent monk, went to administer the sacraments. On the way, a robber, hearing the little bell, followed, and remained without the hermit's cell, thinking himself unworthy to enter it. After the solemn rite, standing near the door, he said to the hermit, with great humility, 'O, if I were such as you are!' And the hermit, with complacency and pride, answered, 'Truly, you ought to wish to be such as I am., these words, the silent brother wept, and, when the abbot departed, the robber ran after them, and prayed God to give him contrition, and purposed going to confession to the abbot; but on the way, falling down a precipice, was killed. The brother, hearing of this, smiled, and the abbot asked him why he wept when he gave the Communion to the holy hermit, and smiled when the wicked robber perished; and the monk replied, that it had been revealed to him that the hermit's soul was lost, by the proud word he had uttered at his death, and that the robber was in paradise, because his contrition was sincere \*."

We have lately seen examples of the true humility, prompting persons, like St. Gertrude, to keep their eves fixed on their own defects, in order to humble themselves the more, while judging all others to be better than themselves +. It cannot be difficult, therefore, to mark the distinctions which are here required. The Catholic Church, even in her formulas and ritual, prescribes expressions that would be inconceivable to the falsely humble; as when in the office of the benediction of an abbot, the pontiff prays "to the Father of all indulgence, who willeth not that the son should bear the iniquity of the parent, and who, with a wonderful dispensation, using evil men for good, frequently worketh grace by them, adding—quæsumus clementiam tuam, ut huic famulo tuo non obsistat quod habitum religionis, per nos, tanta ac tali re indignos accipit. It is not exactly the tone of mind indicated by such words, that characterizes the men who now meet us. Their deeds and expressions only prove the justice of what is said in an ancient rule-" Abjectio et humilitas grandis altitudo est 1." Against even the shadow of this danger, St. Odo, warning men, says, "it is an imprudent humility to involve oneself in untruth, in order to avoid arrogance; for they who confess true good of themselves, are the more joined to humility as they are more nearly associated with truth \( \)." "Frequently,"

<sup>\*</sup> Mag. Spec. p. 635. 

† Vita ejus, i. c. 5.

<sup>‡</sup> Reg. S. Ferreoli, c. 8. ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg.

<sup>§</sup> S. Od. Mor. in Job xxvi.

says the holy abbot of Cluny, exposing the deceit of persons falsely humble, "men feel impelled to speak for a good cause, not through the desire to advise others well, but through the ambition to show off; for it is grievous to the arrogant, if they cannot display what they know; whereas, it is necessary, in a good cause, to have first all pride subdued in the heart, lest, proceeding from the root of a miserable intention, eloquence should produce the bitter fruits of iniquity \*." "A certain Philip, at Paris," says the author of Magnum Speculum, "was so eloquent a preacher, that the Dominicans and Franciscans used to put off all business rather than not hear his sermon. Afterwards, on his death-bed, he was charged by the bishop, to appear to him within thirty days after death, and inform him of his state. He died. On the thirtieth day after, the bishop, sitting alone in his chamber, he appeared, clad in a great cowl, and fetid as a corpse, saying, 'Hic sum.' Then, to the bishon's question, he replied, that he was doomed because he had referred to himself, and not to God and the blessed Virgin, the honour which he had derived from His science. Then he asked what year it was; and the bishop answering that it was only the thirtieth day since his death, he cried, 'O woe! woe!-we thought that it was the day of doom! for, as the snow falls from the sky, so flock souls to this nether world;' and then, with a deep groan, he vanished †."

The humility produced from other sources besides Catholicism resembles very often, in its expression, the spirit of the friend of Job, who begins saying, "Miraculum meum non te terreat et eloquentia mea non sit tibi gravis; ideo viri cordati audite me." "Lo!" exclaims St. Odo, "how in these words pride breaks out"-for it is as if he only addresses those who are worthy to listen to him-" Si autem habes quod loquaris, responde mihi, loquere, volo enim te apparere justum." Thus the arrogant seek to wear the semblance of humility and sincerity; but yet they cannot long persevere in this disguise; for thus Heliu says, shortly after, "Tace et docebo te sapientiam." Then, feeling that they have said something acute, they cannot conceal their elation and despite-"Si habes ergo intellectum audi quod dicitur, et ausculta vocem eloquii mei;" and such words he repeats continually. "These," adds St. Odo, "are the daily defects which appear in the hearts of the reprobate, by which they continually descend to worse and worse things †." What a contrast is here to the Catholic rule which, in a certain symbolic manner, so beautifully expresses the humility of the supernatural character! for in religious communities a reader, when about to begin, says, "Jube, Domine,"

<sup>\*</sup> Mor. in Job xxiii.

to signify, as Rupertus observes, "that no one, unless sent, should preach;" and at the end he says, "Tu autem, Domine, miserere nostri," to signify that even for that act he needs forgiveness, as it is difficult, without some imperfection, even to announce truth \*.

The false asceticism again professes to have a great contempt for the world, and to retreat from it; but here also the supernatural stamp is wanting. In externals there may appear no effort to please any one. "Its cloak, by the age and looks, might be that which was writ for in the time of the primitive Church." Its professions, too, may be loud enough. It may cry, with Flowerdew .-

> " See, brother, how the wicked throng and crowd To works of vanity! Not a nook, or corner In all this house of sin, this cave of filthiness, This den of spiritual thieves, but it is stuff'd, Stuff'd, and stuff'd full as a cushion With the lewd reprobate. Iniquity aboundeth, though pure zeal Teach, preach, huff, puff, and snuff at it; yet still, Still it aboundeth —————†."

Thus it may expostulate and complain as if commissioned finally to try and condemn all the sinners in England. But the Catholic opposition is not precisely of this kind; the contrast, in fact, is easily discerned: for, in the first place, with many the whole of this renouncement consists in words intended for the counter; while, as the Maréchal de Montluc said of some opposed to the loyal porte-grenades, they have a back-shop in which more passes than what meets the public eye. Their practice proves that they like that religion best which will stand, as they say, "with the security of God's blessings unto them." Money-love and by-ends, in the old allegory, cannot long disguise themselves; though its author, who seems to have well known them, represents their casuistry as ingenious, whereby they prove, that " to grow rich in the world by means of religion is what is most wholesome and advantageous." This is not exactly the detachment of Catholicism. But, secondly, even where the world is sacrificed, it is still a distinct phenomenon, very unlike what Catholicism produces. There are persons who do well, perhaps, to shut themselves up in their houses. having nothing to bring with them, if they went amongst others, but jealousy and spite:-

<sup>\*</sup> Rupert. de Div. Officiis, i. 12, 13.

<sup>†</sup> The Muse's Looking-glass.

"In them it is confirm'd, that such as have No share in nature's bounties, know no pity To such as have them."

Their retirement is a very different thing from what Catholicism means by retreat, prescribing it to some few of its children. " Ecce nos reliquimus omnia et secuti sumus te.-Remark." says venerable Bede, "that he not only left all things, but also followed our Lord, for it would be folly to trample on the riches of this world merely for the sake of human praise, and not through a hope of the future life." These men appear to renounce every thing that others love; and, after all, any observer of common acuteness, can perceive that their motive is simply something very human and proud. They fly to solitude, and no one can imagine that they are actuated by any principle but that of gratifying their self-esteem, or a certain morose hatred. prompting them to avoid society. These isolated characters, pining with hungry pride, exhibit defects analogous to those observed in solitary trees: "for trees," as foresters remark, "which have grown on the side of mountains, on the borders of woods-those which stood alone or in hedges, yield a wood that has no other quality but hardness, without even strength. It is rough, cross-grained, full of knots and branches, and twisted so as to be useless for most purposes; whereas trees growing on plains, and in the centre of woods, are softer, straighter, smoother, and proper for beams and boards, and nearly all purposes \*."

> "Not always humble he who seeks retreat, Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great."

These retreats from the world, in the spirit of the world confer no supernatural privilege. Here is only another show of the family of pride. These false solitaries are surpassed in solitude by many who live in the midst of the crowd, mixing even in its recreations. For persons in the world are not necessarily of the world: nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound reverbs no hollowness. "Secessio cum caritate," says the monk Evagrius, "purificat cor: separatio autem cum odio conturbat illud. Melior millesimus in caritate quam solus cum odio in abditis et speluncis†." "I know," says Oniate, in the Queen of Arragon, "that you wear this vanity for fashion sake, and that all those gaieties you seem to admire, are but your laughter." It may even be necessary for many to live in the midst of men. The pines and oaks supply an analogy. For

<sup>\*</sup> Baudrillart, de l'Administ. Forestière.

<sup>+</sup> Evag. Sententiæ.

their stems, to rise to a high point, they must grow in a crowd of trees, as if pressed for room. "The solitary standard," say the foresters, "is hard and full of knots. It resembles the man described by Cicero,- vixit semper inculte atque horride; natura tristi ac recondita fuit: non ad solarium, non in campo, non in conviviis versatus est. Id egit ut amicos observantia, rem parsimonia retineret\*." Plato had in view such characters when he said that obstinacy is the general companion of solitude. These are they who have faith in universal villany, and scorn for all their human brethren; asserting that nature is necessarily and totally evil; whose conclusions respecting it will not prevent others from taking a more Catholic view of life, and approving of the answer of a certain youth, who replies to such misanthropists in a famous history, saying, "for my part, I have lived but a short time in the world, and yet have known men worthy of the highest friendship, and women of the highest love." Nor can the severity of such persons be confounded by any intelligent observer with the austerest results of Catholic discipline, which latter only verify the forest maxim,-

> " Sweetest nut hath sourcest rind, Such the spirits of this kind."

Catholic austerity might urge that it answers such purposes as are fulfilled by the rude season in the year's circle; and while commending its sweet sisters, Spring and Summer, it might say,

——" Think not, 'cause I appear forlorn, I serve for no use: 'tis my sharper breath Does purge gross exhalations from the earth; My frosts and snows do purify the air From choking fogs, make the sky clear and fair: And though by nature cold and chill I be, Yet I am warm in bounteous charity; And can, O men, by grave and sage advice, Bring you to the happy shades of Paradise."

But not so its stern and melancholy counterfeit, which loves to wrong soft hearts, to bring tears to kind eyes, and blindly contumelious, a sting to human thought. "Some austerities and observances," says Father Baker, "serve little or nothing, as proceeding principally from self-love, self-judgment, and the satisfying of nature, even by crossing it†." These modern stoics seem to say that there is no pleasure at all but in contemning pleasures: one might suppose them ready to exclaim,—

\* Pro Q.

+ Sancta Sophia, 27.

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And blessed Daphne, and all such as are Turn'd stocks and stones! would I were laurel too, Or marble, aye, or any thing insensible. My eye can meet no object but I hate it. I can see nothing, without sense and motion, But I do wish myself transform'd into it."

And yet it may be remarked, that their austerity is combined in a certain way with that love of comfort, with that hypercritical examination of every dish placed before them, and of every person admitted to their company, before tolerating either, -with that passion for slyly indulging the palate, and for satisfying the morbid and insatiable demands of personal pride, which a certain worthy author describes, in a chapter professing to contain "infallible nostrums for procuring universal disesteem and hatred." These persons in their austerities, when they do take this turn, resemble John the Faster, whose pride grew with his self-denials; whom St. Gregory the Great detected saying,-" better that meat entered your mouth than a false discourse against your neighbour should come out from it." This faster was cruel and implacable; and he had recourse to the civil power in order to promote his schismatical projects; as, in fact, it is towards schism that this false asceticism generally, sooner or later, turns. Ives de Chartres points out the contrast between Catholic virtue and the austerity which induces men to destroy, as far as in them lies, the university of the body of Christ, by contending that the Church of God is confined to a few. "Recedite, exite inde, et mundum ne tetigeritis; by which is to be understood," he says, "the contact of hearts. Therefore St. Augustin says, 'what is to go out thence, unless to do what pertains to the correction of the evil, as far as each person's position can enable him, consistent with peace? It displeases you that some one has sinned? You have not touched the unclean. You have reproved, admonished? You have gone out thence. Moses cried, Isaiah cried, Jeremiah cried, Ezechiel cried. Let us see if they divided the people of God and passed to others. They continued to enter the same temple, to celebrate the same sacrifices, to live with the same wicked men; but by crying out they went out thence. These men, not sufficiently discreet, going forth as it were to cut down wood, strike the consciences of the infirm as if with immoderate strokes, while seeming to make slight of the universal Church spread over the world. They say 'Lo! Christ is here-lo! He is there;' thus thinking they usurp to themselves the fan before the time which at the end is to winnow the Lord's barn; and as if, with the common Church, nothing was left but straw, they transfer to themselves all the wheat; in which presumption it is greatly to be feared, lest, while they repute themselves to be wheat separated from chaff, inflated with Pharisaic leaven, they should themselves become the chaff\*." Our old dramatists frequently contrast the severe judgments of such moralists with the merciful sentences of the ancient goodness. "These acts," cries the president of a French parliament, in a tragedy of Massinger,

— "repentant tears can never expiate; And be assured to pardon such a sin Is an offence as great as to commit it."

These harsh and terrible rigorists are thought by some to be simply impostors. "To say the truth," says one keen observer, "a sour, morose, ill-natured, censorious sanctity, never is nor can be sincere. Is a readiness to despise, to hate, and to condemn, the temper of a Christian? Can he who passes sentence on the souls of men with more delight and triumph than the devil can execute it, have the impudence to pretend himself to be a disciple of one who died for the sins of mankind?" censorious branch of this character be so evidently evil, is not its rigorism, without distinctions, an equal deceit? " Doth it not attempt to cheat men into the pursuit of sorrow and misery under the appearance of virtue, and to frighten them from mirth and harmless delight under the colour of sin? Doth it not attempt to gild over that poisonous potion, made up of malevolence, austerity, and such ingredients, while it embitters the draught of innocent pleasure with the nauseous relish of fear and shame?"

"With other ministrations thou, O nature!

Healest thy wandering and distempered child:
Thou pourest on him thy soft influences,
Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets;
Thy melodies of woods, and winds, and waters!
Till he relent, and can no more endure
To be a jarring and a dissonant thing
Amid this general dance and minstrelsy!
But, bursting into tears, wins back his way,
His angry spirit healed and harmonized
By the benignant touch of love and beauty."

Peter the Venerable met with a man who had not profited by such lessons. "You observe," he says to him, "the severe commandments of Christ; you will fast, you will watch; and you will not keep the sweetest of all precepts—that or love." Such are the persons who are thought by those who complain

of difficulties here, to imitate Catholic austerities! They are religious, forsooth, though each may be carried to his grave, like the old Duchess of Marlborough, with the reputation of being decidedly the best hater of his time. The mistake, however. can be detected by all who are not wilfully blind! For what two things can be more different? The contrast is palpable, and the profane themselves are not to be deceived. This kind of purity can be recognized by every one who is free from the prejudice that is the consequence of tampering unfaithfully with holy things, as being, perhaps, of all states, the farthest from grace—the farthest from the spirit which breathes in the parable of the two debtors; and no mask can hide that deficiency. It is combined with pride and avarice to a supreme degree. "Love, friendship, gentleness, these," it cries, "are phantoms only of a vain romantic mind!"

—— "But, O my gold! Thy sight's more pleasing than the seemly locks Of yellow-hair'd Apollo, and thy touch More smooth and dainty than the down-soft white Of lady's tempting hand."

But it is wanting also in essentials: it is wanting in indulgence with respect to the weakness of others; and in humility with regard to what it thinks of itself. Its type is respectability, a cold, proud, repulsive spirit of exclusiveness and superiority—a very different thing from the character that wins hearts. It was this spirit which first, in the sixteenth century, suggested the error of the three Mary's, Lefèvre being the author who attempted to prove that Mary the sister of Martha, Mary Magdalen, and the sinner of whom St. Luke speaks, were three different persons, whom the Church confounded in her Liturgy; his reasons being, the assumed improbability that a woman of abandoned manners should have been admitted to follow and assist the Saviour; from which he argued, that neither the sister of Martha, nor the Magdalen, could have been the personsupporting his novel opinion by citations professedly from the early fathers, but which proved to be from late and obscure writers\*. The truth of the popular voice, however, and of the ancient tradition, abundantly demonstrated even at the time, was not required to disprove the harshness of the false asceticism which desired to refute it. Catholicism, apparently, never forgets the parable of the two debtors; never forgets that its Divine author chose a publican for one of his apostles; and told the Pharisees aloud, that publicans and prostitutes would more easily enter the kingdom of heaven than themselves. It

<sup>\*</sup> Monuments sur St. M. Mad. tom. i. p. 3-50.

seems never to forget that, according to St. John, the same Divine Jesus had loved Mary, the sister of Lazarus, the Magdalen. When Catholicism draws the practical consequence, the stern moralist may indulge in ironical admiration, exclaiming,-

> " How soft is charity, fearful to offend The frail one's advocate, the weak one's friend."

But so we are told in reality it is. All that he deems dangerous, extreme, low, and popular, belongs, we are assured, to it. Let him go on with his vituperation. He cannot exaggerate—say those who have authority to speak—its condescensions, its benevolence, its pity, its tenderness. The poet says of Althæa,-

## " \_\_\_\_ Impietate pia est \*."

Catholicism evidently rejects such claims: and they who catch a sight of her images can detect the falsehood of what is opposed to them. Again, to the general virtue and justice of such men, the supernatural stamp of Catholicism is no less wanting. All this morality, supposed to be supernatural, is found, in point of fact, to be depending upon circumstances; for, as the poet says, " a very little thief of occasion will rob those depending on it of a great deal of patience, as of every other virtue; and trial will come unsought." Indeed, it seems generally acknowledged, where Catholicism is unfelt, whether within or without the Church, that occasion ought to be supreme; for what style is more common than that which Shakspeare ascribes to the Bishop of Winchester, when he says to the Duke of Gloucester,-

> "And for dissension, who preferreth peace More than I do-except I be provok'd?"

Yes; only let him be so, and then the hollowness of such asceticism is seen. His injury will then be the gaoler to his pity; and for ever afterwards there will be witnessed what Somerset observes, saving,-

> "Your private grudge, my Lord of York, will out, Though ne'er so cunningly you smother it."

Who is there so blind as to confound such spirits with those of fervent Catholicity? What is there in common between grudges yoked with vows to forgive and the feelings of the Catholic, even in what St. Diadochus calls the medium state of grace, "when," as he says, "we suffer great distress if we have irritated any one against us; and the sting of our conscience will give us no peace until we have effected a reconciliation with the person whom we offended. The pain," he continues, "is still greater if any one is unjustly angry with us; and then we can no longer engage in contemplation until we have appeased his anger: but if he should be unwilling to be reconciled, or if he should be absent at a distance, it will then be necessary that we should join, by a certain fusion of minds, the form of his countenance and our own heart, contemplating their countenance as wholly appeased in our own minds, and thus fulfilling

the law of charity \*." " The devil is a slippery serpent," says St. Isidore, "which, if its head-that is, its first suggestion-be not resisted, will insinuate its whole length imperceptibly into the heart †." Where the false asceticism is practised, there apparently is no such watchfulness; and the consequences, therefore, differ totally from those which follow virtue under the Catholic banner truly followed. So far from imitating the old ascetic manner of trusting to an opponent's word in a contested point, and then when he gave it against them acquiescing,—and like the peasant described by Cervantes, yielding up their claim, with a few graceful words in testimony to the honest character of their debtor, and expressing a conviction that he had said the truth as an honest man and a good Christian, and declaring that they would never again ask to recover it,—these men are grasping, litigious, and implacable. "Formerly," they say, "we have shown our teeth; now we will bite." Such words the stranger heard from men clad in formal coats of sober hue. The least provocation, the least circumstance, suffices to dissolve the views which hollow goodness had presented.

> "So have I seen upon the bosom clear Of wide-spread water, many a tree and tower Reflected marvellously, while their shade Seem'd too far off to fall upon the lake. And with them too the azure vault of heaven Was seen in closeness disproportionate, So that they touch'd it with their spired tops Or little crosses, which had pointed long With baby fingers anxiously outstretch'd To feel its tranquil blue-when sudden dash Of whirling stone destroy'd the witching scene As though by hellish magic; tower and tree, And cross and spire, and intermingled heaven Were dash'd together as in warlike fray, And all their new-reveal'd relationships Were in an instant sever'd from the sight !."

<sup>\*</sup> De Perfect. Spiritual. c. 92.

<sup>†</sup> De Sum. Bono, iii. 5.

Another distinctive mark by which the false asceticism can be recognized, is the absence which it entails of human virtues, and of what may be termed natural goodness. Pliny says, that in odoriferous woods serpents are most numerous. In the moral forest, there is sometimes reason to fear most when the odour of Biblical and ascetic phraseology is strongest: for there are characters provided with an unyielding surface, formed of such terms which resembles the bark of the birch, when, as in Lapland, large trees are found lying prostrate, from which the wood has gradually mouldered away, while the bark remains like a hollow cone, without the slightest change. It is a remark of Burke, that "the theatre is a better school of moral sentiments than temples where the feelings of humanity are outraged." While it would be difficult, perhaps, to disprove what is so boldly said by Roscius in the "Muse's Looking-glass:"—

"There has been more by us in some one play Laugh'd into wit and virtue, than hath been By twenty tedious lectures drawn from sin."

Some may remember having read in a famous history, that "in one point only Square the philosopher and Thwackum the divine agreed, which was, in all their discourses on morality never to mention the word goodness." The same concord is found here among ascetics of this kind; and in truth one cannot wonder at it; for there are many seeming virtuous who very naturally may wish to deny its existence. Yes; there are persons who resemble the cypress, in being, no doubt, incorruptible, in pointing always to the sky, in loving to cast their shadow over melancholy spots, but who resemble it also in the effects produced on others by the odour of their presence; for the atmosphere of a cypress wood is deemed insupportable by some; and it is impossible for any one to feel it long without having the head fatigued. Those who pretend, and even some who really believe themselves to be the representatives of Divine virtue among the higher classes, are often characters that may remind one of this effect produced by the dark spire. All may be strict and respectable, decorous and severe; but there is something in their intercourse that fatigues, that distresses, that exasperates; and those who have to suffer it continually, are often tempted to catch a glimpse at what passes in any other place, heedless of its qualities, so that they can but escape out of the sphere which oppresses them; as in the picture of Hogarth, in which, by means of a gap in a wall, figures are seen passing on the other side, having no relation to the subject of the composition. Virtue by these persons loses its charm and becomes oppressive.

"Here is no fair dawn
Of life from charitable voice! no sweet saying
To set the dull and sadden'd spirit playing!
No hand to toy with yours, no lips so sweet
That only blessings issue from them."

All bespeaks sadness, isolation, bitter coolness; and the consequence in some cases is, that others, who learn to identify supernatural virtue with such outward respectability, direct their affections elsewhere, and find, perhaps, some worth in those who are pronounced, by the same class of moralists, to have lost all. It is a fearful result of experience, when natural benevolence and kindheartedness, undissembling love and disinterested inclinations, are found to exist least where are made the greatest professions of a supernatural morality. Deadly, indeed, must be the offence, and terrible the responsibility, where, perhaps, it is thought wholly absent, when persons, by their own inconsistency, cause observing youth to believe that there exists something which can be more amiable than virtue. If it could be ever lawful to say that life was but a jest, it would be when witnessing the vain religion which false supernaturalists observe. In them all is pride, selfishness, and Pharisaical respectability. There is, in fact, nothing amiable in them-nothing deep, nothing true, nothing constant, but a certain exterior of virtue, sometimes accompanied with an odious cant and affectation, which is enough to exasperate, almost to madness, those who are its constant observers. We read as follows in the Magnum Speculum :- " A certain brother from Egypt came to the abbot pastor, being announced as one who had celebrity in his own country; so the old man received him with great charity: and the foreign brother began to speak of the Holy Scriptures and of spiritual things; and the pastor turned away his face and answered not. So the other departed; and he who had introduced him asked, 'Why did you not speak with so eminent a man?' To whom the old man answered, 'He is from above, and speaks of heavenly things; but I am below, and speak of earthly. If he had spoken to one of the passions of the mind I would have answered him; but he spoke of spiritual things, of which I am ignorant.' Then hearing this, the other returned; and in the fulness of delight which he experienced from the old man's answers, exclaimed, 'Vere hæc est via charitatis\*." This way of charity is not followed by those whose ascetic pretensions are objected to us here. To envy and to suspect, to be harsh and implacable, is the conclusion to which leads all this praying, that does not mollify one rudeness in their nature; and one may be reminded, every time one meets them,

of the description in Froissart, of a certain leader of a fanatical troop, who called himself-" Ami de Dieu et ennemi de tout le monde." The late historian of Innocent III. says, that "to appreciate the eminent moral worth of a man, one must inquire after his possession of three qualities, without which this worth does not exist—that is to say, gratitude, friendship, and the appreciation of the merit of others. Innocent," he adds, "possessed these three qualities, and proved them by his actions \*." The false piety is not concerned with such questions. It is content with that very propensity to suspect and judge others, which Catholicism denounces as a prevarication; and an instance related in the Magnum Speculum, may be cited to show in what that kind of perfection consists: "There was a monk," then says that author, "in a certain monastery, prone to suspicions. The evil so increased, that it became at length an almost constant delusion of the devil. One morning, he hastened to the abbot, and told him that a certain monk, who had just received the Communion, was seen by him in the garden previously stealing a fig and eating it. He added, that he had watched afterwards and seen him receive the Communion. The abbot, on inquiring, found that the monk was not in the garden, nor even in the monastery at the time specified, having been sent after matins, by the procurator, a distance of some miles, and that he had gone straight into the church on his return. The abbot then severely reproved the suspicious brother, and gave warning to the whole community, setting before them the danger of giving way to suspicions, than which nothing can be worse †." The false asceticism deems it sufficient excuse, and a proper answer on such occasions to say, that you do not know the persons whom it accuses; and then it pronounces further discussion on the subject unnecessary. Reckless of the fair name of others, while tremblingly susceptible of the least breath that they can suspect to be directed against themselves, persons of this kind answer, with Dyscolus, when told he ought not to be suspicious,-

" How! suspicious!

Carry me to the justice; bind me over For a suspicious person! hang me too For a suspicious person! Oh, oh, oh, Some courteous plague seize me, and free my soul

From this immortal torment! Every thing

I meet with is vexation."

And then when it is replied,—

<sup>&</sup>quot;Sir, we strive to please you, but you still misconstrue us,"—they exclaim,—

<sup>\*</sup> Hurter, xx.

"I must be pleas'd! a very babe, an infant!
I must be pleas'd! give me some pap, or plumbs;
Buy me a rattle, or a hobby-horse
To still me, do! be pleas'd!
O death, death, lif that our grave hatch worms
Without tongues to torment us, let 'em have
What teeth they will."

Gentleness, kindness, tranquillity, consideration for the happiness of others, enter not in the smallest proportions into this deplorable character. There is found in it a harsh condition; no gentleness can win it; 'tis severe in its constructions, 'tis rancorous. But nothing can be conceived more contrary to the Catholic type of virtue, than the conduct of those who cause themselves to be noted for a strict observance of religious practices, while renouncing all the amiable graces of humanity. St. Isidore of Damietta writes to a priest, Maron, saying, "all the world complains of you, as being more untractable than the wild beast. This brutality of manner must be corrected, or the disgrace will fall upon the Church." Who can confound Catholic constancy with the temper of one, who, as Goethe says, "is like a gentle stream, to which no one dares oppose any thing lest it should foam?" We read in the lives of the fathers, "that a certain brother, sitting alone, was troubled; and going to the Abbot Theodore de Firme, he said to him, 'Vade, humilia mentem tuum, et subde te, et habita cum aliis.' Then he went to the mountain and dwelt with others; and returning to the old man, he said, ' Neither with others have I rest:' and the old man said, 'Neither alone nor with others have you peace. Why do you wish to become a monk? Is it not to sustain tribulations? But say, how many years since you wear this habit?' And he said 'eight.' Then the old man said, 'Believe me, I have spent seventy years in this habit, and I have not had rest a single day \*." The false asceticism would have every thing even and conformable to its wishes; and at the least contradiction it foams like a torrent. The Catholic expects and accepts labour, contradiction, resistance, saying, "Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve first thy obedience." It is kind, placid, indulgent, forgiving; hoping and believing all things well of others. "Master Rudolph, Scholastic of Cologne, whom I knew well," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "when teaching his scholars, used to cite this example against the envious, saying, there was a monk who greatly disliked one of his brethren. The other perceiving it, and wishing to cure his malady, did all he could to overcome his prejudice, discharging every sort of service by which he

thought he could conciliate his esteem, down to the least things -such as turning his pillow and brushing his habit. He succeeded, so that the other began to love as much as he had hated him before \*." Such victories are not achieved, and indeed are not sought for, by the kind of virtue which is here opposed to us. Notwithstanding its boast of a Christian origin, the Pagans knew it well. They witnessed it in the childhood of Alcibiades. when his impetuous passions moved him to throw himself before a cart-wheel rather than cease his play at the word of another, only to let it pass. They beheld it in the men described by Plutarch, as being accustomed to yield to the movements of that part of the soul which is the seat of anger and obstinacy, which they think the principle of courage and grandeur, having no mixture of that gravity and sweetness of reason and instruction so necessary to political virtue-men ignorant of the wisdom of patience, who can bear no injury +. Alcibiades would not play upon the flute for the reason that it distorts the mouth and the whole face; but these false ascetics, "ever in a passion or a prayer," seem to have no such concern, exercising, as they do, their excitable ill-nature, which so alters the human expression, that it cannot be seen without a certain terror, arising from the mere aspect of deformity. What a contrast do they present to persons who exhibit the consequences of the Catholic discipline, which will not even suffer any excuse of official duties to prevail against the duty of nourishing or forming a sweet affable disposition! St. Peter Nolasco, visiting a convent of his order, on entering the kitchen, found the father procurator quarrelling with the bursar for having bought some article too dear. Having heard the cause of debate, he blamed the procurator, and said, "Dear father, ought you for such a trifle to lose interior peace and charity to your brother 1?" In Catholic books, we read of men moved by a consideration of the deep seat of anger in the soul, to vanquish, by an heroic effort, the temptation to indulge in it. "There was a certain brother," says an old author, "in a community, prone to anger. So he said to himself, ' I will proceed and dwell alone, that in solitude I may be able to subdue my bad temper.' He went forth accordingly, and dwelt by himself in a cave. But one day as he drew water, the vessel was suddenly overturned on the ground; and having filled it a second and then a third time, the inequality of the ground still causing it to turn over, he grew furious, and in a passion broke the pitcher. Then immediately recollecting himself, he said, Lo, I am alone, and the same demon deludes me. I will

<sup>\*</sup> iv. c. 26. † Vit. Coriol.

<sup>#</sup> Hist. de l'Ord. de la Mercy, &c. 118.

return to the community, since every where there is need of patience.' And so he returned to his ancient dwelling \*."

But not alone anger and impatience characterize the false asceticism. Deep spite and persevering hatred are often seen united with it to a surprising degree. When meeting persons influenced by it, one may be reminded of the conduct of Henry IV.'s chancellor, when he showed, as Pierre Mathieu says, such wonderful eagerness to effect the ruin of the Duc de Biron. Among the papers which La Fin had given to the king, twentyseven pieces were chosen as most conclusive against the duke: and then we read, "le chancelier garda ces papiers avec telle solicitude qu'il les fit coudre à son pourpoint, pour ne les fier qu'à soy-mesme, et ne les monstrer que quand il seroit temps †." In general these false pretensions to supernatural morality are combined with qualities which the world itself justly dislikessometimes even justly abhors. "But this man that I tell you of," says Ferrarese, in the supposes of Gascoigne, "is half a saint." Ay, replies Litio, " and the other half a devil,-I hold a penny." The false asceticism exposes every man and woman that embraces it, to become objects for that kind of prayer which a witty author ascribes to beggars, saving, "that they all have prayed for them, as their manner is, from the teeth outward." Its effect is as sure to follow, as that perversion of head consequent on Voltaireanism, to which the Count de Maistre alludes, saying, "this is the infallible operation of the modern philosophy on every woman whatever:" for a religion that is in contradiction with nature and truth, produces manners quite as repulsive as the results of rejecting all religion. The character of Blifil, represented by Fielding,—that mind so cunning and selfish may impose on men for a time. All the world may talk of its piety; but there will be some one, sooner or later, to say of each who resembles him, "I own I never greatly liked him. I thought he wanted that generosity of spirit which is the sure foundation of all that is great and noble in human nature." The poet alludes to an instance familiar to his countrymen, in which even the form is repulsive from the first, saving,-

"The great Creator to revere
Must sure become the creature;
But still the preaching cant forbear
And even the rigid feature,"

That cant, experience proves, can easily combine with qualities

<sup>\*</sup> Mag. Spec. 409.

<sup>+</sup> Pierre Mathieu, Hist. de Hen. IV. liv. v.

that might serve for an invocation in the style of the spirit in Manfred:-

"By thy cold breast and serpent smile, By thy unfathom'd gulphs of guile, By that most seeming virtuous eye By thy shut soul's hypocrisy."

Don Diego de Miranda, who, without affectation, describes his mode of life so as to make the simple squire take him for a living saint, this old Catholic Spaniard,—who hears mass every day, who judges no one, who shares his substance with the poor. who makes no parade of his good works, who tries to make peace between those that are at variance, who devotes himself particularly to our blessed Lady, and who always trusts in the infinite mercy of God our Lord, -acknowledges that he is more inclined to the reading of profane, provided they are upon subjects of innocent amusement, than religious authors. You are surprised, perhaps, at such a conclusion; but it only shows that he had learned to distinguish between piety in action, and the conventional, exaggerated effusions of mere paper-blurrers, who, on all occasions, and for all times, have such trinkets ready in the gross. This disposition arose no doubt from his having observed that hypocrites and perverse ascetics, armed with a false conscience, were always sure to decry the former books, and to recommend exclusively the latter. Disgust had produced a reaction in his mind, while the instinct of right and wrong, as determined by religion itself, supported him in a conviction that he was not, for all that, less under the Catholic influence, however those who made more parade of it might be pharisaically scandalized at his frank confession.

"A relaxed morality," says the Père de Ligny, "produces only one disorder; but an exaggerated morality—harsh so as to be judged impracticable or inconsistent in not regulating the temper, by producing a reaction, despair, or indignation—gives birth to all disorders." In truth, the latter often arises from an ill-proportioned, unharmonious, angular, undisciplined character; and where this exists all claim to goodness ceases. If a bad heart and a truly philosophic head be incompatible, we may be sure that the same disposition, and the real supernatural morality of the Catholic Church, have never yet been united in the same individual. Catholicism disowns a religion without natural affection; as when Horatius Pulvillus, hearing of his son's death, and fearing to interrupt the ceremony, said coolly, Tolle cadayer\*. Its spirit can never be confounded with the

morality, whatever may be its ascetical or Biblical pretensions, of men-

"Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty, Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves."

True, it is not for any of us to scrutinize thoughts; our mortal eyes pierce not the secrets of the heart; God alone is privy to them. Of every individual professing the three virtues, we should say with Dante, in addressing Him who is omniscient,—

"If he in love, in hope, and in belief Be steadfast, is not hid from Thee \*."

But when challenged to explain why the virtues of Catholicism should be considered as of Heaven's making, and why the morality opposed to it, or only pretending to be inspired by it, should be pronounced wanting in regard to the supernatural stamp, there can be nothing wrong in calmly pointing out the visible difference which exists, and saying, in allusion to them,—

Σημα δέ τοι ἐρέω μάλ' ἀριφραδὲς, οὐδέ σε λήσει †.

These men may be confident about their own state of mindmore confident than those whom Catholicity inspires. We find an instance in proof as to the latter, in the history of Innocent III., by Hurter. "It has been cited as a proof of his reproachless life," says this great historian, "that nothing that he ever ordained has been changed; and yet notwithstanding his great sanctity, it is said that it was revealed to St. Luitgarde, that he was in purgatory for three things, which the author of that life would not disclose through veneration for so great a pope. It is said, also, that Innocent confessed to this saint, that without the intercession of the blessed Virgin, which he owed to the erection of a convent in her honour, he would have had to suffer the pains of eternity ‡." Catholicism encourages the desponding and awes the security of the falsely confident, by saying, with St. Augustin, " If there be not the grace of God, how shall he save the world? and if there be not free will, how can he judge the world §?" So too of man, the poet says,

The danger lies, yet lies within his power; Against his will he can receive no harm."

But within himself this danger is manifold. There may be an erroneous conscience, when, "as men at sea think land, and

<sup>\*</sup> Par. 24.

<sup>‡</sup> Id. xx.

<sup>†</sup> xi. 125. § Epist. xlvi.

trees, and ships, go that way they go, so both heaven and earth

will seem to go his voyage."

"As the surrounding air," says St. Diadochus, "when the north wind blows continues pure and serene, but on its change to the south becomes suddenly clouded over and obscured, so the soul, when moved by the influences of the Holy Spirit, remains free from all demoniac clouds; and again, when blown upon by the spirit of error, becomes darkened by a dense congregation of vapours, therefore we must always endeavour to turn towards that luminous air, that we may retain mental serenity and enjoy the light of true knowledge \*." Ægidius Gabrielus, contrasting the diabolic with the Christian morality, treats on the danger, in the different professions of life, of forming a deceitful conscience +. "Error of conscience," according to St. Bonaventura, "is caused in eight ways: first, by ignorance; secondly, by negligence; thirdly, by pride, as when one does not submit his understanding to wiser judgments, against whom the Apostle says, 'Captivantes omnem intellectum vestrum in obsequium Christi;' fourthly, by singularity, as when a man, following his own sense, does not conform himself to others, nor follow the common ways of the good, of whom we read in Numbers, 'Extrema castrorum consumpsit ignis.' Therefore we read that the true ascetic, Marina de Escobar, on one occasion said, 'I was confused at such revelations made to me, because whenever any thing of this kind occurs, if, by any means I can use my liberty, I always recoil from them, as from extraordinary things, through my great desire to follow the Divine will, in the ordinary way of faith t.' Fifthly," continues St. Bonaventura, "error of conscience is formed by inordinate affection, which inclines the conscience to what a man wishes; sixthly, by pusillanimity; seventhly, by perplexity, as when a man is unable to discern how he should act, from having an erroneous conscience; eighthly, by an inordinate humility, as when he thinks himself in fault without reason \( \rightarrow \)."

Some or all of these mistakes may be traced in the false asceticism which is proposed, as proof either that the supernatural morality is not confined within the Catholic Church, or that, supposing it were so, it would yield no evidence of its Divine truth; and, after thus hearing them pointed out, we may, in fine, remark, that this care and discernment, which are employed expressly to detect and avoid all spiritual imposture, constitute of themselves a distinct signal. Catholicism is not

<sup>\*</sup> St. Diadochus, de Perfect. Spiritual. c. 75.

<sup>\*</sup> Specimin. Mor. Diabol. xlix. ‡ Vit. M. P. ii. lib. ii. c. 41.

<sup>§</sup> Compend. Theolog. Verit. lib. ii. c. 52.

responsible for what is seen without its range of influence, even though externally within its pale. As soon as a branch is cut, it belongs no more to the tree. "Without doubt," as the Count de Maistre observes, "that which is still green, and that which has not even yet reached the ground, differ from that which has been turned into charcoal ten years ago; but, for the tree, it is all the same-they are no longer it, nor its, nor of it \*." Here is then a first and general warning; but many more specific and minute directions are supplied. Cardinal Bona and other great authors have treated formally on the art of discernment in regard to spirits. In the works of Marina de Escobar, we are shown many marks by which may be distinguished the true from the false inspiration of persons who are said to have visions. for instance," it is said, "the person should evince an affection for certain earthly things, whether riches or honour, or a propensity towards relations, or any other view to a personal object, it is a sign that the defects of desire and of immoderate appetite exist in the soul; and when such a person thinks or says, that he is visited by God and His saints, I am not to be persuaded that it is true; -but when the person seems to be actuated by no passion or natural desire, but only by God, there the conclusion may be different. If such a soul should affirm that God spoke to it, and visited it, and that His saints communicated with it, I should say, that I was ready to believe it to be true. The signs for discerning spirits," continues the prudent observer, "seem to be these :- first, the Spirit of God is a Spirit of truth and goodness, a love of wisdom, and of peace, of sweetness and consolation, of fortitude and perseverance in that which the Divine Majesty says, communicating with it, without violence, but sweetly, and without affliction. Then, after a true communication and vision of God, and of His saints, the soul feels comfort, though the devil tries to disturb it with a passing trouble, which soon yields again to consolation. The soul also. admiring the admirable secrets of God, glows with a Divine love, and daily grows more forgetful of earthly things, and deserts them; and, above all, it daily increases in the acts of a virtuous life; and this is the especial sign that God is the author of such things, and that the vision proceeds from Him; and it is to be remarked, that the admiration decreases as the familiarity becomes greater; whereas, the holy fear, and circumspection, and reverence of God, increase constantly +." These distinctions, proposed for the detection only of that false mysticism which takes the prophetic form, are applied with no less utility when it is a question of observing the difference which exists between the supernatural morals and those which are falsely

ranked amongst them, whether practised without or within the Catholic communion; and the deep, thoughtful observation which they indicate, points to the truth of that religion which employs them for the guidance of men. But we must take leave of those whose pretensions are proposed as an objection to the conclusions which have been hitherto drawn from the facts presented on this road. These counterfeit ascetics may hear, for parting salutation, such words as Cadmus addresses to Agar, wishing her the good so difficult for her to obtain, of faring well.

—— χαῖρ', ὧ μελέα θύγατερ, χαλεπῶς δ' εἰς τόδ' ἆν ἥκοις.

-Farewell; though it is difficult for you to fare well\*. Not always, but often, the homelier and severer lines might be substituted-

"Trudge, Hipocrisie, trudge;
Thou art a good drudge,
To serve the devill:
If thou shouldest lye and lurke,
And not entende thy worke,
Thy maister should do ful evill."

## CHAPTER VI.

THE ROAD OF NATURAL VIRTUE.



HERE cannot virtue dwell? How many still shades hath she found out to live securely in? The objection started on the last road having been removed, let us proceed to observe as another avenue that the Catholic virtues, while thus supernatural in their origin, motives, and effects, are, to the view of us ordinary men, at

the same time essentially human, that is to say, suitable to man, appropriate to his condition, subservient to the use which he was evidently intended to make of all his passions and faculties, and that, in fine, they recommend themselves to his natural understanding, to his imagination, and to his heart, as well as to his supernatural judgment, enlightened and directed by Divine faith. "Man is naturally Christian," said one of the early fathers. That

\* Bacch, 1380.

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he is naturally Catholic, is an identical proposition. If you will distinguish, and insist that some parts of this supernatural character result from conscience, and some from external sacred teaching, you will not be able to deny the harmony which exists between them.

"The constant loadstone and the steel are found In several mines; yet is there such a league Between these minerals, as if one vein Of earth had nourish'd both. The gentle myrtle Is not engraft upon an olive's stock; Yet nature hath between them lock'd a secret Of sympathy, that, being planted near, They will, both in their branches and their roots, Embrace each other."

Thus can these slight creatures fortify the reasons that we frame

for that agreement which is to be considered here.

Shallow persons talk of being content with natural religion, and of rejecting revealed religion; but for uttering such sentences they are simply absurd and ridiculous. "This language," says a great author, "supposes that the religion which they cal 'natural,' has not been revealed, and that the religion divinely revealed is not natural, whereas this is wholly false, and the exact contrary is the truth. The former is only what has been originally revealed, and then transmitted; the latter is in man's nature, conformable to his nature, among the exigencies of his nature, though wanting to his nature."

The supernatural virtues of Catholicity are presented as forming not an universal opposition, but a supplement to nature; and, in point of fact, it is found that they only develop and perfect nature. We might say that the shade which they cast resembles that underneath the Lombardy and white poplars, which, unlike that of many other trees, is extremely beneficial to vegetation. Natural virtues are most abundant when in greatest proximity to faith, as it is close to lofty stems that the sweet

wild flowers grow in the woods.

Catholicism recognizes human virtues, and in no way counteracts them. Under the influence of human philosophy, they often fade and wither.

"——But here's such a dew
As drops from beauteous heaven in the morning
To make the shadowy bank pregnant with violets,"

It is common, indeed, with some persons, through a certain kind of zeal, to represent all things that are not formally mentioned and approved by revelation as interdicted; but not to observe the impossibility of such utter contradiction as this would imply, we

may, on many grounds, conclude that it is otherwise. The mere loves and joys of poor humanity may produce more than our searching witnesseth. "Who of men," asks a poet, "can tell that the course of nature would proceed in order if all those dreams and wishes were to cease with the slight actions that they prompt and perpetuate, blessing the world, perhaps, with benefits unknown? Truly," he continues, "I would rather be struck dumb than speak against these common virtues, nourished amidst entanglements with which our souls knit so wingedly, that men, flying from the haunts and customs of ambition, have been content to let occasion die, and cultivate them, adhering humbly to all sweet influences that maintain, by a mysterious power, the order and the happiness of life." "Man is neither to be excluded from his supernatural end, nor debarred from attaining to his natural perfection; for the rational creature is made to have his natural perfected by supernatural virtue." This is what St. Bonaventura says\*.

In human nature, the variety of characters is such, that it might be compared to the diversity which exists in the vegetable productions of the forest, where there are no two individual things indiscernible. "One of my friends," says Leibnitz, "speaking on this subject with me once in presence of the electress in the garden of Herrenhausen, thought that he would find at least two leaves exactly similar. The electress defied him to do so. He searched for a long time, but it was in vain." Now, the supernatural element leaves this diversity still existing. It only sheds a beautiful, harmonious, and transparent colour

over it, producing thereby a variety in unity.

St. John Climachus speaks of the conformity between nature and grace. "Certes, there are in us," saith he, "many natural virtues. For the Gentiles gave alms, and even dumb animals evince love when deprived of each other. Similarly, we all have faith and hope, as when we navigate and sow the earth; so that, since even charity is in us as a natural virtue, virtues cannot be far from nature. Therefore, let those blush who pretend weakness and inability. Let, then," he continues, "no querulous person object impossibility with respect to the evangelic precepts, for there are souls which do more than fulfil the precepts; for some love their neighbour more than themselves, which they are not commanded to do, and in proof expose their lives for him †."

It is as delightful as it will appear strange to many, now to observe thus a father of the desert pointing out common, everyday incidents as examples of heroic charity, while he perambu-

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin. Æter.

lates, as it were, the streets and high-ways, mixing with the plebeian youth that throng them, in order to observe those who are ever ready to risk their lives to save another from mischance. Ægidius Gabrielus treats expressly on the concord between the natural and supernatural morality\*; of which many instances can be produced from the ancient poets, as when we read in the Eumenides, "let each one honour his parents, and respect the right of the guest who asks an asylum at his hearth,—

καὶ ξενοτίμους ἐπιστροφὰς δωμάτων αἰδόμενός τις ἔστω †."

For, as we have observed on a former road, even this latter sentiment falls in with the views of men Catholically and ascetically inspired. All that Catholicism purposes in this respect, we are assured, is to supply the needful complement to human virtue; and in requiring the supernatural addition, we find that it prescribes nothing that is not, however elevated and perfected, in agreement, both with the human conscience, and with what the ancient philosophers expressly taught; for Plato says, that "we must associate with each natural virtue an acquired virtue in order to have true virtue;" as if he held that naturally we had only half virtues. "It is a celebrated sentence of philosophy," as St. Thomas of Villanova says, "that species of things are like numbers, since by adding a unit to any number there arises a new species.\(\frac{1}{2}\)." It is thus with human virtues when the supernatural influence descends through the medium of the Catholic religion,—

" Quamvis ad tantas operas, tantumque laborem Naturæ suspiret opus, citraque residat: Supplebit tamen ipsa manus divina, quod infra Perfecti normam naturæ norma relinquet, Quod natura facit divinus perficit autor §."

As Dionysius says, "natural are perfected by supernatural virtues ||." "All motions of the mind," says St. Bonaventura, "are created for good, and for our eternal end; but they cannot realize their fruit unless they be supernaturally perfected by supernatural virtues. Thus the flame of natural love must be transferred to better things, that is, to supernatural perfec-

<sup>\*</sup> Specimen Mor. Christianæ, lxxi.

<sup>#</sup> De Div. Mich. i.

<sup>§</sup> Alani Mag. Encyclopædia, lib. ii. c. 2.

<sup>†</sup> Eumen. 545.

De Aug. Hier. i.

tions\*." Savonarola, accordingly, addressing God, says, "By Thee my soul was created right; for by nature it loves Thee above itself; and on account of Thee it desires all things. For natural love is right, because it is from Thee, and only depraved by its bad will, which contaminates natural love. Renew, therefore, this spirit and this love by Thy grace, that it may resume its nature †." Conformable, therefore, to Catholicism, is the poet, singing thus beautifully,—

"I saw thy pulse's maddening play
Wild send thee pleasure's devious way
Misled by fancy's meteor ray,
By passion driven;
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from heaven."

Theologians go so far as to esteem Divine certain graces which are commonly classed only with human virtues. Thus a Franciscan author says, "there is some touch of Divinity in mild and gentle tempers; and God has always been pleased that those who nearest approach to Him should be the most humane. The Holy Ghost has never been seen in the form of an eagle or of a hawk, but of a dove, to stamp in our manners the impres-

sions of his sweetness ‡."

Rupertus, with all the schoolmen, remarks, that "in the rational creature there is a certain reflection of the Trinity; for in man, as in the angels, we find three things answering to the three Divine Persons, namely,—life, intelligence, and love \( \lambda \)." remains of the Divine image," says Leibnitz, "are the innate light of the understanding, and the freedom inseparable from will,"-two things, we may remark by the way, which Protestantism denies. "The innate light," continues Leibnitz, who admits, however, the necessity of revelation from the first, "can be proved against certain modern writers, both by the Scripture, which says that the law of God is written in our hearts, and also by reason on this foundation, that necessary truths can be demonstrated by principles innate in the mind, and not by the induction of the senses." Then, in another place, speaking of the principles of nature and grace, he says, "we might discover the beauty of the universe in each soul, if one could unfold all its pleats, which are only developed sensibly with time; but as each distinct perception of the soul comprehends an infinity of confused perceptions which envelope all the universe, the soul itself only knows the things of which it has a perception, as far as it has

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin. Æter. 

† Med. in Ps. Mis.

<sup>‡</sup> B. Weston on the Rule of the Friar-Minors, ch. x. 4.

<sup>§</sup> De Div. Officiis, lib. xi. c. 12.

distinct perceptions. Each soul knows all things confusedly, as when walking on the sea-shore, and hearing the great sound which it makes, I hear the noises made by each wave, of which the whole sound is composed, but without being able to distinguish them. Upon the whole," he concludes, "nature leads to grace, and grace partly even making use of nature, brings nature to perfection."

Catholicism, we are told, turns to advantage every thing in nature. With all its severity and spirituality, it recognizes the

truth of what a poet says, that-

"Man is of soul and body, formed for deeds
Of high resolve, on fancy's boldest wing
To soar unwearied, fearlessly to turn
The keenest pangs to peacefulness, and taste
The joys which mingled sense and spirit yield."

" Man," says St. Bonaventura, "must work both corporally and spiritually, since, according to both natures, he is capable of beatitude \*." Passion without virtue leads to evil; corrected by virtue, it conducts to God. The best are often men of strong, but controlled passions. St. Bonaventura cites the example of the senses, to show the office of the mind. "If we consider," he says, "the army of the senses, we shall behold the order of living; for each sense exercises itself on its proper object, flies what is hurtful to itself, and refrains from usurping what belongs to another. So the sense of the heart lives orderly, exercising itself on its proper object, which is against negligence, avoiding what would injure it, as concupiscence, and not usurping what is alien to it against pride. For, whatever is inordinate comes either from negligence or from concupiscence, or from pride; and as each sense seeks its own gratification, without being satiated, so should the heart desire what is its peculiar object, namely, God, and the union of the soul with Him. Thus, the five spiritual have conformity with the five corporal senses +." Catholicism is never heard protesting against the popular judgment, which pronounces some persons to be more than others naturally good. St. Pius V. used to say, "that those who are peculiarly endowed with gifts of nature are most easily led to the light of truth." Hear St. Augustin-"Despise your own spirit. Take the Spirit of God. But let not your spirit, in consequence, fear lest when the Spirit of God begins to dwell in you, it should suffer straits in your body. When the Spirit of God begins to dwell in your body, it does not therefore exclude your spirit. Fear not. If you receive

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin. Æter.

<sup>+</sup> De Reductione Artium ad Theologiam.

any rich man into your house you suffer straits. You cannot find where you can remain, where a bed can be prepared, where you can place your wife, your sons, your servants. 'What shall I do?' you say: 'whither shall I go? whither shall I migrate?' Receive the rich Spirit of God. You will be enlarged; you will not be straitened.—You have enlarged my steps under me. When you were not here I suffered straits; you have filled my cell, and you have excluded not me, but my straits. For when He saith, 'Charitas Dei diffusa est,' that diffusion signifies breadth. Fear not, therefore, straits; receive that guest, and let it not be as a passing guest.—Recipe hospitem istum, et non sit hospes quasi de transeuntibus \*."

Catholicism allows no one to suppose that they express virtue best, who in their lives run on every side farthest from nature. On the contrary, it says, with Alanus de Insulis, "Dupliciter justus appropinquat saluti æternæ; per dietam vitæ naturalis, per dietam vitæ spiritualis †;" which conviction he expresses in his great poem, saying, of the youth whom he instructs-

> "Ut vitium fugiat, naturam diligat, illud Quod facinus peperit damnans, quod prava voluntas Edidit, amplectens quicquid natura creavit."

On an ancient triptych we see our Lord instructing His apostles. On one wing of the picture Moses is receiving the law; on the other, the good Samaritan is exercising charity; and below the whole these words are inscribed-

"Hæc quaque prome, quibus vis ignea spirat Amoris Quod natura jubet; Deus, atque Ecclesia mater."

What, in fact, does mother Church command? Nothing but what nature orders, or what has become necessary to secure fidelity to her original prescript; of which we may say, in the words of the ancient moralist, that, "though it were to be praised by no one, it is eminently worthy of praise, nature itself being the judge—quod dicimus, etiam si a nullo laudetur, natura esse laudabile ‡." These rules, prescribed by Catholicity, are nature's still; for, as our poet says-

> "Nature, like liberty, is but restrain'd By the same laws which first herself ordain'd."

So Antonius de Guevara, writing to the Count of Miranda, says, "Whatever we are obliged to be as Christians, we are obliged

<sup>\*</sup> St. August. de Verb. Apost. Serm. xv.

<sup>+</sup> Sum. de Arte Prædicat. c. 48.

<sup>#</sup> Cicero, de Off. i. 4.

to be as men; and hence it is, that the yoke of Christ is said to be light \*." Therefore, though Catholicism sees realized what the patriarchs only foresaw and hoped for—

"Yet were not they who clomb the older heights Of sanctity unlike throughout to those Of Christian days?"

Catholicism is κατὰ φύσιν, to use Pindar's words. It is founded in nature. Its morals, its legislation, its thoughts-are all in harmony with nature; and, therefore, natural law is said to be "a link which connects ecclesiastical with temporal jurisprudence, being an integral part of both." The Roman jurisconsult Paulus says, "that theft, for instance, is forbidden by natural law;" and Ulpian says, "that it is a thing naturally wrong." The institution of property is grounded on natural law, as being necessary for the welfare of society. So, in the sphere of religious duties, all that Catholicism requires is naturally just; and if an idea or an action be not naturally just, or conducive to justice, it is a proof that Catholicism does not require it. Accordingly, when the profound Alanus describes the vices that are opposed to prescriptions of religion, it is nature which he represents as lamenting human degeneracy. Following it through least as greatest things, he says—

"Hos casus natura videt, lapsusque cadentis Mundi, virtutem vitio succumbere—
Hos gemit excessus, errores luget, abusus Deplorat, mundumque dolet sub nocte jacere. Vult hominem formare novum, qui sidëre formæ Et morum formå reliquos transcendat et omnes Excessus resecans regali limite gressam Producat, mediumque tenens extrema relinquat: Ergo tuo nutu numen cœleste caduca Visitet, et corpus cœlestis spiritus intret, In terra positus, in cœlo mente beata Vivat, et in terris peregrinet corpore solo†.

In cujus speculo locat omnis gratia sedem: Forma Joseph, sensus Judith, patientia justi Job, zelus Phinees, Mosyque modestia, Jacob Simplicitas, Abrahamque fides, pietasque Tobiæ‡.

Totum componit hominem, contemperat actus, Verbaque mentitur, libratque silentia, gestus Ponderat, appendit habitus, sensusque refrenat.

<sup>\*</sup> Epêt. Dorées. † Encyclopæd. lib. vi. c. 6. † Id. vi. 7.

Demonstrat quæ verba, quibus, vel quando tacenda, Quæve loqui deceat, ne vel dicenda tacendo Strangulet, aut nimio largus sermone tacenda Evomat, atque seram diffuso subtrahat ori. Describit gestum capitis, faciemque venuste Suscitat ad recti libram, ne fronte supina Ad Superos tendens videatur spernere nostros Mortales, nostram dedignans visere terram: Vel nimis in terram faciem demissus, inertem Desertumque notet animum: Et ne degeneres scurrili more lacertos Exerat, et turpi vexet sua brachia gestu: Aut fastum signans ulnas exemplet in arcum. Admonet illa virum: vel ne delibet eundo Articulisque pedum terram, vix terrea tangens. Ejus legitimo format vestigia gressu. Ne cultu nimio crinis lascivus adæquet Femineos luxus, sexusque recidat honorem; Aut nimis incomptus jaceat, squalore profundo Degener, et juvenem proprii neglectus honoris Philosophum nimis esse probet, tenet inter utrumque Illa modum, proprioque locat de more capillos \*."

But let us observe how nature itself, speaking by the universal traditions and common sense inseparable from them of mankind, recognizes the supernatural virtues of Catholicism, with more or less perspicuity inculcating them one by one.

What is there, in the first place, more natural and more conformable to every knowledge by which man regulates his actions, than that very love of God, springing from a sense of the Divine goodness, which is the animating principle of this morality?

"Quod loquor et spiro, cœlumque et lumina solis Respicio (possumne ingratus et immemor esse?) Ille dedit +."

That these words might be applied with more justice to our Creator than to a human parent, some even of the heathens would acknowledge. Reason must subscribe to every syllable that the mystic guides of Catholicity lay down respecting this obligation, as when St. Paulinus of Aquileia says, "whatever benefit we derived even from our dearest parents, is to be ascribed to God, who provided them for us, and made them for us; and after all His grace of creation and redemption, He seeks from us nothing else but that we should love and serve Him, that He may dwell in us, and we remain in Him; for He does not ask from us gold or silver, or precious vestments, or

lands, or other such things; but He asks only for ourselves, that He may rest in us. Let us approach Him, therefore, that we

may have life eternal \*."

We must remember that Catholicism comprises no idea of the Divinity that is not in accordance with that which is conveyed in the parable of the two debtors. It follows, therefore, if the Catholic doctrine be once heard, that men cannot turn from the love of God without turning from humanity, and ceasing to have a human heart. "What else have we to do in the dark night of this world," reason itself will then demand, in the words of the same patriarch, "excepting to fly from the devil, and to introduce Christ, to capture the captivator, and to follow the Liberator, to dispel diabolic darkness from our heart, and to inhale the true light +?" As Pope Alexander said in his epistle to the Sultan of Iconium, addressing an infidel, alien to faith, "he is an obdurate being, and unworthy of the name of man, who does not venerate the mercy of Jesus, who does not love such a clement Lord, and who is not ready, if necessary, to die for Him t."

Catholicism demands nothing in this respect but what is reasonable, and by the universal judgment of men pronounced amiable; for all that it asks, is, that a man should act towards God as a generous youth would act towards his friend or master who forgave him on earth, and then it assures him he will be like David, one after God's own heart; and besides, how evident to reason is the truth of what St. Augustin says, that in this life all virtue consists in loving what ought to be loved! To choose that is prudence; to be moved from it by no troubles is fortitude; to be enticed from it by no seductions, is temperance; to be led from it by no pride, is justice. What is this object. then, but God, whom, if we do not love, we do not love even ourselves. To Him we proceed not by walking, but by loving. "Ad eum ergo qui ubique præsens est et ubique totus, non pedibus ire licet sed moribus o." "My heart," says the Italian poet, "tells me that it cannot live by itself for a single day." What more natural partner than He who knows it best; and who requires even that, while loving Him, we should love our fellow-creatures also? for be it never forgotten, that after all our supposed predilection for humanity and natural goodness, the most natural, the most human, the most condescending word, the word most smelling of woods and violet banks, the most redolent of youth and spring, the most indulgent and delicious word that ever was addressed to ears of flesh and blood, has been pronounced by revelation, by supernatural truth, by truth

<sup>\*</sup> Lib. Exhort. ad Henric. c. 21.

<sup>‡</sup> Ap. Mat. Paris ad An. 1169.

<sup>+</sup> Id. c. 59. § Ess. lii.

itself, when it was said so calmly and so piercingly, "if you love not those whom you have seen, how shall you love God, whom you have not seen?" Oh, ben'gn, gracious, paternal, yea, maternal voice,—like the word of mothers, like the whisper of lovers, like the breathing of hearts, that soothes, that tranquillizes, that ravishes our nature; voice capable of bringing down heaven upon earth, and of sweetening death even in our agony! Let us hope that having loved, though to excess, though not wisely, those whom we have seen, that having nourished the habit of keeping our heart open to individuals, saying secretly, perhaps, to each on passing,

"—— I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood,
What joy to hear thee, and to see!
Thy brother, lover, I would be,
Thy play-mate—any thing to thee!"

that, having thus loved all our brethren and sisters in Adam, the known and the unknown, the intimate and the stranger—all who have ever crossed smilingly our path,—all, whatever be their knowledge or their ignorance, their use or their abuse of opportunities to enjoy the felicity of truth, we shall be enabled to love Him whom we have not seen, from whom we know that all beauty, all gracefulness, all charm, must take their origin yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.

Nor is there, again, any thing in the importance attached to the soul, and to spiritual interests, by Catholicity, which is not, still using the word with reference to original revelation, naturally just, naturally evident, naturally admirable. An English author, in his account of his early days, after describing the despair in which he passed a certain interval, says, that "from this state of abjectness, he was raised by a young woman of his own class. She was a neighbour," he says, "and whenever I took my solitary walk with my Wolfius in my pocket, she usually came to the door, and by a smile or a short question, put in the friendliest manner, endeavoured to draw my attention. heart had been long shut to kindness, but the sentiment revived at her words, and the gratitude I felt for it was the first pleasing sensation which I had ventured to entertain for many dreary months." This was a charming incident of our English life; but Catholicism has no tendency to render it, in respect to the friendliness it exhibits, one of unusual occurrence; or to prevent a pitying woman's voice from sweetly sounding. Mix with a Catholic population mindful of the eternal riches, man's only portion for his heavenly marriage, possessing a sense of the soul's importance, estimating all things with a view to it, as when you traverse those fields of Andalusia, where, as a celebrated traveller says, "you find old Christians and young loves," and then return to a land where the people seem wholly forgetful or ignorant of the soul; where each child is held to be but a raw young thing, not worth the ground he treads on, and say, do you observe in the latter a single quality naturally dear to the human heart, which you do not find equally, if not in far greater perfection, in the former? Of course, there are some points on which their tastes are different. Naturalism, in regard to its contrary appreciation of things, is exposed, in his usual cheerful manner, by Antonio de Guevara, writing to one of that class of society which yields its representatives in most abundance. "You complain," he says to Don Inigo de Velasquez, constable of Castille, "that I am long saying mass; but I assure you if I am long in saying my mass, you are not short in your discourses; for I have often seen you begin something of which I never dared to wait for the end; for if I had waited, I should have had to leave the Palace to dine at twelve o'clock in the day, or to go to my bed at midnight. As for me, I must, at the mass, be long, having so much to consider there for the correction of my life; for it would not be just to be long in sins and short at prayers. Similarly you say, that 'I am long and prolix in my sermons. To that I answer, that there is no sermon in the world long, if he who hears it hears it as a Christian, and not as a critic. I remember that in the last Lent, being with your lordship, some salmon were presented to you, which you found much to your taste, only that you said they were fine but small; so that you have never found salmons long, or sermons short. Thirty-and-eight years is it since I was led to the court of Cæsar, during which time I have seen all things grow excepting sermons, which always continue of the same length; and to show you the truth of this assertion, I have only to refer to repasts, which are become so much more expensive; to houses, which are now more magnificent; to dresses, which are more costly; and to men, who are grown more vicious; so that, in conclusion, whatever be the subject, whatever be the discourse, it is allowed to be long, excepting in the sermon which must never exceed an hour."

But turning these jests out of service, let us talk in good earnest, and observe what reason and tradition pronounce by the mouth of Plato, respecting the importance of the soul and what relates to it. "The most real plenitude," says this philosopher, "must arise from the most real things; now, what relates to the body is far less real than what has reference to the soul; for the former is corruptible and mutable, and the latter immortal and unchangeable. The body itself is less real than the soul. The

plenitude of the soul is, then, more real than that of the body, as being itself more real, and the things which fill it being more real. If, then, pleasure consists in being filled conformably to nature, the most real plenitude must yield the greatest pleasure. Therefore, those who devote themselves to mere sensual pleasure, can never be filled or experience pure and solid joy; but like animals, ever bent to earth, they dispute brutal pleasures, and are insatiably tormented because they do not seek to fill that part of themselves which alone is capable of true plenitude \*." "No." he says elsewhere, "what truly honours us, is to follow what is best in us, and that is the soul, which naturally flies from evil. After the gods," he continues, "the soul is what man has the most divine, and the nearest to himself, -θειότατον, οἰκειότατον ον. There being two parts in man, the superior ought to command; and therefore the soul should have the first place in our esteem. Almost no one, however, honours it; for it is not to honour it to raise it by knowledge, or riches, or power; but it is only by rendering it better. It is not honouring one's soul to believe oneself always innocent, and lay the blame on others. On the contrary, this is to injure it. It is not honouring one's soul to give oneself up to pleasures, but it is dishonouring it. Neither is it honouring one's soul to consider life as the greatest good. but on the contrary, this is degrading it †."

The voice of the East corresponds with these passages of Plato. The Vedas, for instance, inculcate the necessity of that sublime science which rises above nature for the deliverance of the soul from the mists of earth. "Man," it says, "must recognize the soul—man must separate it from nature—then it comes not again," meaning no more transmigrations for it. It is nature, therefore, which Alanus de Insulis represents as prompting prudence to confer on the youth it

guides a sense of the importance of spiritual riches,-

"Non illas largitur opes, quæ sæpe potentum Excæcant animos, et majestatis honorem Inclinant, minuunt leges, et jura retardant; Sed potius donat thesaurum mentis, et omnes Divitias animi: quas qui semel accipit, ultra Non eget, immo semel ditatus semper abundat. Quarum rectus amor, possessio nobilis, usus Utilis, utilior largitio, fructus abundans ‡."

The Catholic appreciation of what the world offers, is, in fact, nothing but what nature, directed by reason, including traditional

<sup>\*</sup> De Repub. ix. + De Legibus, lib. iv. ‡ Encyclopæd. lib. vii. c. 6.

knowledge, must admit to be just. Both will say with Cato in the distichs of the twelfth century,—

"Quod vile est carum, quod carum vile putato. Sic tibi nec cupidas nec avarus nosceris ulli."

Speaking of Seleucus and Ariobarzanes, the heathen historian says, "quodque pene fidem veritatis excedit, lætus erat qui regnum deponebat, tristis cui dabatur\*." Yet it was not Catholicity which formed the judgment of these men. Nature itself produced it. So true to its sentence is the poet, saying,—

"For not that which men covet most, is best;
Nor that thing worst, which men do most refuse;
But fittest is, that all contented rest
With that they hold; each hath his fortune in his brest.
It is the mynd that maketh good or ill,
That maketh wretch or happie, rich or poore;
For some that hath abundance at his will,
Hath not enough but wants in greatest store;
And other that hath litle asks no more,
But in that litle is both rich and wise;
For wisdome is most riches; fools therefore
They are, which fortunes doe by vowes devize;
Sith each unto himself his life may fortunize."

Whatever contributes, like Catholicism, to lead us from the hard and barren paths of a miscalled utility, to expatiate in the boundless luxuriance of those regions of thought which belong to the spiritual part of our nature, and have something in them higher than a money value, must be agreeable, and not contrary to nature; for why is it that the character of youth so charms us, if it be not its exemption from the false wisdom of the world, and the debasing vices of avarice and merely worldly ambition? The story told by Paul Louis Courier, of his young companion when travelling in Calabria, furnishes an example. Losing their way in a forest, they arrived after dark at a house that stood alone, and had, on entering it, a most sinister aspect; the hosts having the look of charcoal-men, and the walls being hung with guns and cutlasses. "Every thing displeased me," he says; "but my companion, on the contrary, was quite one of the family; he laughed and talked with them, and with an imprudence that I ought to have foreseen, he told at once our whole history. Just imagine! amongst our most mortal enemies, alone, out of our road, far from all human succour! and then, to omit nothing that might ruin us, he spoke of his portmanteau, begging them to take care of it, and to put it at the head of his bed; he did not wish, he said, for any other pillow. Oh, youth! youth! you are to be pitied! Cousin, one would have thought we carried the crown diamonds. What caused him so much solicitude about this portmantean, was a bundle of letters from the girl that he loved." Nature and the world, which is so often opposed to it, certainly appreciate the relative value of things very differently, and that is all that was proposed to be shown in citing this anecdote.

The forest supplies an analogy with the action of faith in respect to the renouncement of superfluous cares; for the Epicia, or Pinus picea, clear themselves of their lower branches, and at the proper time, when at the age of eight or nine years, their branches would touch each other; and so they leave just the right space to enable the trees to rise to the greatest height; for, if at too great a distance, they would never rise well. Than the grave or seemingly austere principles of Catholicism, lopping off thus what is injurious, causing detachment from the avaricious, ambitious world, and the rejection of hurtful luxuries, nothing can be more consistent with nature. "All this even," as Cicero would say, "præclarum magis est quam difficile; non est enim positum in labore aliquo, sed in quadam indictione animi atque voluntate."

What is the austerity required by Catholicism, in comparison with that which nature often imposes on itself? Take but a puerile instance. Who does not remember the time, if it should be even already past, when his highest ambition was to resemble some one that discharged a duty, more or less answering to the task of him whom the Spaniards name the "delantero," who is also called jestingly "the condemned to death." Who is this "delantero?" and why is the latter title given to him? He is generally a boy of some twelve or sixteen years of age, who, mounted on the leading mule that draws the public coach, is obliged to remain in the saddle the whole length of the journey, sometimes for three days and nights. The mule is changed, but the "delantero" never. The coach itself only stops one hour or two in the summer to abandon the route to the devouring heat, and in winter a few hours in the night. This is all the rest allowed to the poor juvenile; and yet, such is nature, that perhaps there is not one boy in a thousand who would not prefer being this creature "condemned to death," to have the full enjoyment of his ease as one of the delicate company inside.

Take, again, an example from what is called society, and the pleasures which result from secret pride, and the vanity against which Catholicism is directed. Isi t not evident that the labour and difficulty must be encountered in acquiring, not in combat-

ing, the pride which disdains to speak but to cloth of tissue, or the taste for what is worldly and affected; since natural beauty and natural endowments must please most, and that as a general truth it may be said,—

> "The exactest traits of body or of mind We owe to models of an humble kind."

Nature itself would incline us to dislike, for instance, that life of drawing-rooms, which is included in the career of persons devoted to the phantom of respectability and greatness, whom the poet so well describes in the lines,—

"Green fields, and shady groves, and crystal springs, And larks, and nightingales, are odious things; But smoke, and dust, and noise, and crowds delight; And to be prest to death transports them quite."

In those mansions where fortune segregates from the vulgar the rich and honourable, "great wits in Spanish, Rhenish, and Tokay," when apartments are illuminated, and banquets spread so exquisitely and profusely, that the same poet, ridiculing hypocrites, might recommend all who love solid dinners, and to board with saints, to secure an invitation to them, all attractions are not found. There are whose fancy rejects them, it being pointed for another pole. There is still, in the estimation of many, among the young at least, a certain under-age pleasure in being one of the excluded, as one who wanders like a truant whom nobody in such circles knows; as one who, for a moment, has nothing to do with the people for whom a certain witty author of late expresses such compassion, who are "living in a state of utter respectability, presenting their compliments, and requesting the honour, and much regretting, who are pinioned at dinner tables, or stuck up in card-rooms, or cruelly planted round a tea-table; for to behold the setting sun, while one is rambling, as at Clifton, among the rocks and thorn-bushes on the cheerful downs, or,

"— When vespers 'gin to rise
That summons home distressful travellers,"

to consort with the clear dewy night, walking where none shall hear us but the harmless birds, to witness the magic charm which moonlight casts around the most familiar scene, causing so bright to sparkle some sweet eye that looks upon us, reminding one, perhaps, of that passage in the Spanish tragedy, where Hieronimo, grieving for his son, exclaims,—

"Had the moon shone in my boy's face, there was a kind of grace

That I know, nay I do know, had the murd'rer seen him His weapon would have fallen, and cut the earth; Had he been fram'd of nought but blood and death."

These, I say, are still enjoyments to which a delightful escape will seem most glorious, whatever pride may think of them, and notwithstanding all that will be said by those persons who either are, or are striving to make themselves, people of consideration in society, like the man described by Addison, who never knew the name of any one under a peer or peeress,—persons of whom, as Wordsworth says, "nineteen out of twenty are incapable of a feeling of poetry," which, in his sense of the word, is to be incapable of either a love of human nature, or a reverence of God, whose daily and hourly ambition is, to gain the privilege of being reckoned among those whom everybody knows, who night after night are only to see the light of lustres, and the reflections upon plate and jewels. Hark! how the bird calls me, methinks I hear those whom I love best say, when anxious to leave such circles. "It is as comfortable," they go on to whisper, citing Raybright's words,

> "To lie upon the embroidery of the grass Unminded, as to set a world at gaze."

To be talked of and wondered at. What is the light of the most brilliant palace thronged with company, to that pale shining of the moon within some hiding-place of branches, some little spot where true friends meet, "taking glimpses of its fair face like the nested wren from beneath a sheltering ivy leaf \*?" Nature has power thus, by means as slight as fancy's touch can weave, to make men shake ambition from their memories, and brim their measure of content. Catholicism will then be found to attract those minds which, long after they have ceased to be bound up in duodecimo as Sylli says of Clarinda's page, "deem it sometimes lawful to hold plea thus against the power of greatness, in favour of such undershrubs as those who like to borrow fashions from the commonalty." Catholicism, like nature, imparts a kind of boyish love for cheap pleasures; it creates a distaste for the expensive luxuries of those whose whole endeavours are spent in feasting, speaking, and in winning votes: whose objects gained,

" --- Can ne'er entrance

\* Keats.

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The heart in an existence of its own, Of which another's bosom is the zone."

It is not Catholicism, loving private life with all its endearments, which puts to flight unbounded hope and heavenly ignorance of what is called the world,—

"The moments when we gather from a glance More joy than from all future pride or praise."

It is, on the contrary, the world's ways opposed to it which cause men to hold whatever is cheap to be contemptible, and to resemble so often those public men described by an old dramatic poet, as "a rugged kind of sullen fellows, with implacable stomachs, and hard hearts." A committee-man's, like an old man's pleasure, is often very chargeable: there is much cookery belongs to it. Catholicism and nature involve a great saving by means of tastes which require more bodily labour than expense. "When I was young," says the hero of an old play, "this, which you deem little, was enough for me."

"——For then I gave my mind And ply'd myself to fruitless poetry; Which, though it profit the possessor nought, Yet is it passing pleasing to the world."

Thus it will be with many still, whose hearts have read love's deep divinity; and then farewell to all the torments of insane, malicious vanity, trembling at the thought of being neglected by the great, and undermining the whole edifice of virtue by its insidious growth. Then the poor, simple privacy attending the walk by owl light, with some friend of one's choice, as cheap to gain as it is to hear the whistling of a bird, will make the countenance more joyful than it could be ever rendered by all the social distinctions wound up with a card of invitation to a select assembly. Why, if you will hear the poet, the pleasantest and gayest assembly in the world, of which even the memory can gladden the heart, is that of the flowers in the forest-vale, which every common lad and lass can join,—

"I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd—
A host of golden daffodils,—
Beside the lake beneath the trees
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay;

Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.
The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company;
I gazed, and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought;
For oft, when on my couch I lie,
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye,
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils \*."

Thus we arrive at the conclusion that nature agrees with what is highest in the moral order, causing us to fix practically our desire, not on honours, not on riches or their adjuncts, but on assimilation with those who are wholly removed from the sphere of worldly ambition. Renaud de Montauban, in the old chivalrous romance, which displays so much both of Catholicity and natural judgment in the views which it takes of life and human actions, considered, as we are expressly told, all men as equal, and only distinguished them by their virtues; he considered as child's play those distinctions that fortune and birth create amongst men; he had no respect for conventional merit, which only exists in opinion; and in this sense he considered himself on a level with the poorest and lowest of men. This custom made him find his actual condition, when a destitute wanderer through the wood of La Serpente, as pleasant as when he reigned in Dordogne or Montauban. It was with these views that he offered his services to serve a stone-mason as one of his workmen, who, when he afterwards left them, after being their companion for a considerable time, regretted him universally, as in fact we are told they would all have died for him. can men be delivered from a pernicious load of things superfluous, including innumerable delusions, that presses others to the earth, and makes them earthly to the heart of heart, extirpating by the roots, among other virtues, all active charity; for the love of the world suspends the operations of benevolence, since worldly things lessen upon dividing, and therefore partners in them look upon one another with an evil eye; whereas Catholicism, by making men esteem a happiness which may be common to all, without one man's joy becoming another's disappointment, renders them fruitful in every amiable and generous affection; "as trees which like their soil, they can be observed then

<sup>\*</sup> Wordsworth.

shooting out in expressions of kindness, and bending beneath their own precious load to the hand of the gatherers."

But not alone Divine charity and the higher graces are interested in the cultivation of such natural views; health and beauty, genius, industry, illustrious achievements, renown, all require the artifice of the pines, that stripping of the individual from what would prevent his rising in the strength and purity of manhood. Plutarch says that the style of Demosthenes bespeaks the man-meditative, the water-drinker, known by the simplicity of his manners. Would you have what Statius so commends,—

"Blandos honos, hilarisque (tamen cum pondere) virtus \*?"

You will be obliged to adopt, though you may not call them by their right name, Catholic manners. According to Aristotle and many others, "virtue is a habit of moderating passions by reason,"—or, simpler still, "a habit of acting according to reason." Catholicism says nothing more; praying, as on Holy Saturday, that "men may have strength—contra oblectamenta peccati mentis ratione persistere." What is unnatural does not belong to those "in Christo credentes à vitiis sæculi et caligine peccatorum segregatos;" but, on the contrary, it characterizes those who seek, by a misuse of reason, to sanction the very enticements from which the natural office of reason is to deliver men.

"The passions of the mind," says Cervantes, "naturally impair beauty, and very often utterly destroy it." Perhaps nothing can show in a more striking manner than this fact that what Catholicity requires is conformable to nature. The Catholic mystic writers speak invariably of the reasonableness of all the moral obligations that they suggest. "Those who follow rational piety," says Henry Suso, "so accommodate and refer their reason and understanding, that whatever they think, act, or omit, is done with true discretion according to the mind of the holy Catholic Church, to the praise of God, and the tranquil peace of all mortals. Which mode of living, reason and the intelligence approve and confirm t."

St. Bonaventura, observing that the kingdom of God is in the mind of man, proceeds thus: "the rational powers of man are soldiers who impugn, by the arms of justice, the powers of concupiscence. The animal or sensual powers, are as rustics and mechanic artificers, who minister necessaries for the body. The intellectual powers form the senate for consultation and government. This whole society must be kept in peace and order,

<sup>\*</sup> Sylv. ii.

and subject to its king; all extraneous disturbance being driven out \*." Can any thing be more natural than such representations of the duties of men? what is there in them strained or repugnant to reason? That control of the passions which Catholicism imposes, is so little in contradiction with nature, that the ancients expressly recognized its necessity. So, according to Plutarch, Dion said, "Others have made war their chief study, but as for me, I have lived long in the academy, in order to learn how to subdue anger, envy, and obstinacy. The proof of this victory over the passions is not the gentleness and moderation that one evinces towards friends and virtuous persons, but the elemency and humanity which one exercises towards those who have treated us with injustice. If Heraclides be a wicked, envious, and perfidious man, ought Dion, for that reason, to renounce his virtue and give way to anger †?" Hear how magnificently the Roman orator ascribes this selfcommand to Cæsar, recognizing, at the same time, its elevation above nature, " Nihil sibi ex ista laude centurio, nihil præfectus, nihil cohors, nihil turma decerpit. Animum vincere, iracundiam cohibere, victoriam temperare, adversarium nobilitate, ingenio, virtute præstantem, non modo extollere jacentem, sed etiam amplificare ejus pristinam dignitatem, hæc qui faciat, non ego eum cum summis viris cómparo, sed simillimum Deo judico. Your warlike virtues," he continues, "are extolled by the whole world-sed tamen ejusmodi res, nescio quomodo, etiam quum leguntur, obstrepi clamore militum videntur, et tubarum sono; at vero quum aliquid clementer, mansuete, juste, moderate, sapienter factum, in iracundia præsertim, quæ est inimica consilio, et in victoria, quæ natura insolens et superba est, aut audimus, aut legimus, quo studio incendimur, non modo in gestis rebus, sed etiam in fictis, ut eos sæpe, quos numquam vidimus, diligamus †."

"Patience," said the Roman historian, "is no less than fortitude, the index of a generous spirit, and is, in fact, identical with it \( \int \)." Dion the Syracusan, being driven from his country by Dionysius, came to Megara, where, when he called upon the prince of the city, Theodorus, and was not admitted, waiting for a long time without, he said to his companion, "we must bear this patiently, for perhaps we ourselves, when we retained our dignity, have done as much for others ||." The Romans admired Pompey, bearing all insults "quieta fronte;" they admired Fabius Maximus for saying, "not to contend is to

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin. Æter.

<sup>†</sup> Pro Marcello.

<sup>+</sup> Vita Dion. § Val. Max. iii.

conquer." Why then should Catholicism be reproached for requiring a gentle, noble temper, and a soul as even as a calm? Why should its morality be deemed unnatural or exaggerated, for inculcating peace and forgiveness, when men are to extol M. Æmilius Lepidus for being reconciled with Fulvius Flaccus, and M. Livius Salinator for making his peace with C. Claudius Nero, -- and when, with the ancients, they are to admire, as heroic acts, the reconciliation of P. Africanus with Titus Sempronius Gracchus, of Cicero with Gabinius, of Clodius Pulcher with Cornelius Lentulus, of Caninius Gallus with C. Antony, and of C. Rufus with Q. Pompey? "Speciosius aliquanto," says the Roman historian, "injuriæ beneficiis vincuntur quam mutui odii pertinacia pensantur \*." Catholicism, therefore, seems, after all, to recommend itself to nature, even in regard to that yielding, pacific, angelic character, represented as irreconcilable with nature, which nevertheless it substitutes for the worldly animal type opposed to it of moral greatness.

As in regard to the passions of anger, envy, and resentment, so also with respect to pleasure, the control exercised by Catholicism is conformable to what nature and reason acknowledge to be just. Who must not admire this gallant mastery of a man's self that is implied in it?

By overthrowing outward enemies,
Since strength and fortune are made sharers in it,
We cannot, but by pieces, call our own:
But when we conquer our intestine foes,
Our passions bred within us, and of those
The most rebellious tyrant —
Our reason suffering us to like no longer,
Than the fair object, being good, deserves it,
That's a true victory!"

Aristotle said that man, as if a mortal God, was born for understanding and acting, and not for the sake of obtaining pleasure, like cattle; and Cicero, speaking of the Epicuræan idea, that pleasure was his end, says, that whatever sense he may have attached to it, "invidiosum nomen est, infame suspectum†." Cephalus, in Plato, designated a sensual life as being under the yoke of a furious and brutal master; and Socrates called the passions raging tyrants‡. It is clear, therefore, that however reason was resisted by the old world, there is nothing in the Catholic discipline in this respect, but what even such of the heathens as were conscious of obeying reason would approve of.

<sup>\*</sup> Val. Max. iv.

The Roman historian would be thought now to write like a Jesuit, for he says,-" Magna cura præcipuoque studio referendum est, quantopere libidinis et avaritiæ furori similes impetus ab illustrium virorum pectoribus, consilio ac ratione summoti sunt: for that house and that state will longest stand, ubi minimum virium Veneris, pecuniæque cupido sibi vindicaverit, nam quo istæ generis humani certissimæ pestes penetraverint; ibi injuria dominatur, infamia flagrat \*." Catholicism, which, as Gerbet remarks, constructs a world in which the instincts both of man's animal and civil life can be satisfied in a superior order, -Catholicism, which causes piety, as Bossuet says, to go hand in hand with nature, - Catholicism, which practically decides against the Stoics, according to the just remark of an old poet, that " not to enjoy pleasures were to make nature guilty of that she ne'er was guilty of, a vanity in her works,"-no doubt is inflexible on some points, having no new morality to substitute for that taught by the Decalogue and by the patriarchs, by Christ and his Apostles; but nature or reason will subscribe to every tittle of its denunciations: and this is so true, that those whom the Pharisees most scorned would be willing witnesses to attest, that there are sins which render those who commit them vile. There is, when a complete paralysis of the moral nerve takes place, a certain brutal spirit manifested by language, to which rationalism and its allies have often appealed for sanctioning ridicule directed against Catholicity and a general contempt for all that demands human reverence. One consummate wretch has lived to connect this spirit with literary fame. Than the spirit of Rabelais, perhaps no more deadly corrosive exists on earth to destroy vital principles; honour, love, every noble and heroic affection, fade away before it; but nothing, perhaps, throughout the whole range of human prevarication, can be more contrary to nature, and to the very instinct of youth; for it must be acknowledged, that the animal nature itself has a certain delicate sense of what is becoming and graceful; the whole man abhors whatever will not admit of being in some degree elevated by the imagination to assume a beautiful or noble aspect: no antipathy between things most averse in nature, holds a stronger enmity than his mind with what is essentially and irredeemably foul. It scorns it with all the indignation that the purest virtue can demand. It even admits often all that religion would have admitted; it admits that " pleasure is insatiable; that as the fly playeth with the flame till at last she is cause of her own decay, so the lover that thinketh with indulgence to content his unbridled appetite, is commonly seen the only cause of his own consumption;" it

<sup>\*</sup> Val. Max. iv. 3.

admires even what, for the moment perhaps, it cannot imitate: it acknowledges those to be happy ages which are pure, and which believe in purity; it is led by experience to confess, that the man who loses wholly the check which is involved in the Catholic morality, becomes at last like a noble instrument, of which the mainspring is broken-of which the movements intended by its maker are stopped, indicating that some complete disorganization has taken place within; and it will not contradict the austerest preacher when he is heard to say, with Antonio de Guevara, instructing princes,—" sins of the flesh produce no other fruit but to leave the body mortgaged, the understanding nailed down, the memory obfuscated, the senses corrupted, the will damaged, the reason overthrown, the reputation destroyed, and, what is worst of all, the flesh made flesh for ever \*." In the old moral masque of "The Sun's Darling," it is, in the main, the testimony of nature which the Sun expresses, saying,-

"The powers from whom man does derive the pedigree Of his creation, with a royal bounty, Give him health, youth, delight, for free attendants To rectify his carriage: to be thankful Again to them man should cashier his riots. His bosom's wanton sweetheart, idle humour, His reason's dangerous seducer, folly. Then shall. Like four straight pillars, the four elements Support the goodly structure of mortality; Then shall the four complexions, like four heads Of a clear river, streaming in his body, Nourish and comfort every vein and sinew; No sickness of contagion, no grim evil Or deprivation of life's real blessings, Shall then affright the creature built by Heaven, Reserv'd to immortality."

The ancients did not associate any of the circumstances and features of a dissipated licentious life with what is either beautiful, amiable, or natural. Plutarch says expressly, that when Dion, after his fall, came to Corinth, and was found disputing with actresses on pieces of music sung in theatres, it was thought that such extreme baseness in his amusements and tastes could hardly be accounted for by his natural disposition, however mean †. Such men saw nothing amiable in the sensualist, whether young or old,—nay, the very popular voice was appealed to. "Quis est," says Cicero, "qui non oderit libidinosam adolescentiam? quis contra in illa ætate pudorem, etiam si sua nihil

<sup>\*</sup> L'Horloge des Princes, liv. ii. 935.

<sup>+</sup> Life of Timoleon.

intersit, non tamen diligat\*?" The Roman historian, treating De Pudicitia, and invoking it, exclaims, "Tuo præsidio puerilis ætatis insignia munita sunt. Tui numinis respectu sincerus juventæ flos permanet:" and after commemorating the love of modesty which distinguished P. Mænius and Fabius Maximus Servilianus, he adds other examples to show how much it was esteemed :- " Quam sanctam igitur," he says, "in civitate nostra pudicitiam fuisse existimare debemus, in qua etiam institores libidinis, tam severos ejus vindices evasisse animadvertimus †." In fine, during the very worst and most corrupt period of modern times, there was still a similar testimony supplied by unsuspected witnesses, as when Davenport concluded one of his plays with these most expressive lines:

> - " The bad Are nature's clouds, eclipsing her fair shine; The good, all gracious, saint-like, and divine."

But take again the features of that temperate sober life required by Catholicism, and remark how conformable it is to nature. We observed on a road long past, that the ecclesiastical law of fasting and abstinence recommended itself to the humanity of the rich, as furnishing means for becoming, in some respects, like the common people, who cannot fare well every day. Certainly it is most conformable to natural benevolence, that men should desire such conformity. In the Celtic homily of the library of Cambray, it is said.—" As St. Paul laboured of the labour of others, so in the same way does it become every person that he participate secretly with every one in every privation of food, and in every labour t." Can any thing be more humane and generous than such precepts? However, in general on this point, it is not the severity, it is what some will think the laxity of the ascetic principle, which we have to observe. True, where faith prevails, we have not the daily feasts of Dives, nor the barbaric orgies of those savage times, that beheld a constant succession of clubs, designated by such names as the "Roving-boys," the "Tityretus," and the "Mohocks," beginning with the Reformation,-for no trace of them can be detected in our older literature,-and partly perpetuated, at least in Ireland and Kent, even to the present day; societies which sought, glass in hand, to put down Catholicity for ever by gladiatorial or bestial vociferations: but neither have we the exaggerated abstinence, in which, at all periods of the world, some have thought to make virtue consist. The law of the Carthaginians, which inter-

<sup>\*</sup> De Finibus, v. 22. + Val. Max. vi.

<sup>#</sup> Bib. de l'École des Chartres, iii. 200.

dicted wine to all who bore arms, and obliged them to drink only water during the war, enjoining the same abstinence on magistrates, pilots, judges, and on all who assisted at a deliberative assembly, only draws from Plato the remark, savouring of irony, that "with such customs, a state, however great, needs but few vineyards\*." "The furious passions of the Arabs," says Thomassin, "rendered necessary the absolute prohibition of wine: as it was easier to interdict wholly than to moderate its use. Whereas experience shows that the moderate use of wine among Christians, our Timothies, and other religious men, is a convincing proof of the command which they have acquired over their passions †."

St. Paul advised Timothy to take wine in moderation, and our Lord Himself drank it, being called, in consequence, a wine-drinker, as St. Bernard takes care to remind men. Catholicism, therefore, has not to answer for the indiscriminate and total abstinence from wine, which some, without necessity (for where cause exists, the case totally differs), have sought to identify with temperance. "Whoever at table wishes to abstain from wine, may do so," it says, "with the rule of St. Isidore;" for abstinence is to be praised, provided it does not spring from a contempt or hatred of the creature conceded to human use; and, similarly, the angelic doctor distinguishes, saying, in his sum,

as rhythmically expressed-

"Sobrietas, circa Potum;
Bona virtus, quæ non totum
Nobis vinum subtrahit;
Senum est, et juniorum
Fæminarum et virorum
Apta virtus omnibus §."

The austere founders of religious orders did not reject absolutely the gift  $\tilde{civov}$   $\dot{\eta}\tilde{c}v\pi\delta\tau\sigma\iota\sigma$ . St. Stephen of Grandmont wished that his disciples should daily take a little wine||. There never was a more inexorable censor of all condescensions, in regard to penance, than St. Peter Damian, and yet he restored the use of wine to his hermits after making trial of its abolition ¶. With these distinctions, however, in regard to all sobriety, we can trace the salutary influence of Catholicity every where; nor has this religion ever swayed a people, existing in a normal state,

\* De Legibus ii.

† Thomass. Traité des Jeunes, ii. c. 6.

‡ Regula S. Isid. cap. x. ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg.

§ Sum. Theol. Rhyth. Synopsis iii.

| Levesque, Annales Ord, Grand. Cent. i. | Ap. Thomass. Traité des Jeunes, ii. 6.

that is, deriving from it all the instruction and consolations which it desires to supply, without producing a temperate people.

"I nunc sæcula compara, vetustas Antiqui Jovis, aureumque tempus Non sic libera vina tunc fluebant \*."

While heresy was protesting against such golden ages and bettering the instruction of its great symposiarch, while philosophy, a little later, was closing churches and multiplying the wine-shop, Catholicism was quietly, uninterruptedly, unostentatiously producing those manners that seemed so admirable to Louis Cornaro, that illustrious Venetian, who, in the sixteenth century, wrote his celebrated work, De la Vita Sobria. In barbarous times, it had sought by legislation to correct excess. In a code of the ninth century, we read, "If a layman should get drunk, let him fast three days on bread and water;" and elsewhere we find it enacted that, "whoever should be found drunk, must thenceforth use only water until he recognizes that he has done ill †." In times of high civilization, it produced whole nations, like the Spaniards, that from free choice seemed to have adopted the plan of Charles le Téméraire, who drank only water. ages it realized, in countless multitudes, as it still continues to do, the type of Cornaro, the conclusion of whose treatise may in fine be cited to exemplify its effects. "Such then," saith he, "is Divine sobriety, agreeable to God, the friend of nature, the daughter of reason, the sister of virtue, the companion of a temperate, modest, noble life, content with little, orderly and pure in all its works. It is as the root of life, of health, of joy, of address, of science, and of all the actions worthy of a wellborn and accomplished man. Human and Divine laws favour it. Before it fly, as noxious vapours from the sun, repletions, disorders, debauchery, excess, fevers, with pains and perils of death. Its beauty attracts every elevated mind; its certitude promises to all a gracious and durable preservation; its facility invites each, without much trouble, to carry off the victory. fine, it promises to be the amiable and benign guardian of life to rich and poor, to old and young, and to both sexes alike. teaches the rich man modesty, the poor economy; it inspires the young man with more firm hope of a long career, and it enables the old man to keep off death. Sobriety purifies the senses, renders the body lighter, the intelligence quicker, the mind cheerful, the memory faithful, the movements of the limbs agile, the actions prompt and fitting. By means of it, the soul, as if disengaged from the body, acquires freedom; and all the

<sup>\*</sup> Stat. i. † Regino, Abb. Prum. de Eccles. Discip. lib. i. 84.

different parts of the frame conspire to form in us a beautiful order, an agreeable and joyous harmony. O holy and innocent sobriety! comforter of nature! true physician of the soul and body! how ought men to praise and admire thee!"

Such philosophers would find Catholic manners in the birds, so true to universal nature is the standard of this virtue; for, as

poets say,-

"The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.
With nature never do they wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free."

But we must not pursue further these similitudes between nature and the supernatural virtues of Catholicism. We might. indeed, continue to show how reasonable, how natural, how amiable are the manners resulting from the morality of the Catholic Church, in which virtue may always soft humanity put on, and win men to its embraces, as if with a charming youthful countenance. "Oh! if this young man, of whom you speak, were to approach the sacraments, how amiable would he be!" exclaims the Count de Maistre, addressing the Countess d'Edling. When Savonarola describes his imaginary journey through heaven, and the conversations which he held with the children, vouths, and maidens there glorified, who, having been once of Florence, inquire from him respecting their former companions, who are still on earth, how charming are the traits of manners which they recommend him to inculcate among their brothers and sisters, on his return to them; and how clear is it that, even according to human appreciation, they would be much more engaging if they were to follow the advice, and refrain from the faults which these celestial friends detected in them, and pointed out for his correction? A young man who should act under this generous influence, would bless the house a thousand times he dwelt in; like the youthful hero of a celebrated history, of whom the landlady, at whose house he lodged, says, on hearing him accused of violence, "I am convinced that it was not he who was in fault; for of all the men I ever had in my house, I never saw one so gentle, or so sweet-tempered. He was beloved by every one in the house, and every one who came near it." If birth, beauty, good shape, youth, manhood, be natural gifts, -and these are not injured, but graced by Catholicity,-is not discourse, learning, gentleness, love, virtue, liberality, and such like, which are all especial gifts of the latter, what our poet calls them, "the spice

and salt that season a man?" It were a solecism to imagine that there is any thing in the central influence to spoil even that young bravery who lives in the perpetual sphere of humanity. The religion taught by the Creator does not introduce confusion into the natural order of human life, by substituting for vital principles an irrational system of control, which might be described as a putting every thing and every person out of its place. After making all just and natural reserves, it agrees with the common sentiment of mankind, expressed so beautifully by the ancient poet, saying—

"Why should not youth fulfyl his owne mynde As the course of nature doth him bynde? Is not every thyng ordayned to his kinde? Report me to you, reporte me to you.

Do not the flouers sprynge freshe and gaye, Plesaunt and sweete in the month of Maye? And when thier time cometh, they fayde awaye. Report me to you, reporte me to you.

Be not the trees in wynter bare? Like unto their kynde, such they are; And when they sprynge their fruites declare. Report me to you, reporte me to you.

What should youth do with the fruites of age, But live as is meant in hys passage? For when age commeth his loves wyll swage. Report me to you, reporte me to you."

Take man, in his relation to strangers, to the family, to society, to the State, and what can be more conformable to nature than all which Catholicism lays down? Is it not but a just and natural prescription which requires that in youth our sweet affections should not be swayed by avarice and ambition, and that when choice of a partner has been made, the woman should be gentle to him who has espoused her, and the man her chief; that, while loving and devoted to enhance her joys, he should find in her his companion every where, his fairy, his every thing that love and poetry have invented, and "that he should not," as the author of the Menagier de Paris says, "be corrected by the domination ou seignourie de femme, since, il n'est, si povre homme ne de si petite valeur puis qu'il soit marié, qui ne vueille seignourer \*." Here is only one instance; but what more natural or conformable to reason than all the social les-

sons of Catholicism, as opposed to those of men styling themselves Socialists, who have risen up, from time to time, to disturb and endanger society? Again, in the purely moral order, what more natural than there should be a recognition of different degrees of perfection all consistent with future beatitude—as in the lines expressing the sum of St. Thomas—

"Sunt autem Incipientes Perfecti, Proficientes, In diversis statibus \*?"

"Fratres quidem mei boni sunt Deo devoti," said St. Samson to his father, who presented him his brothers and one little sister, when he came to them from his convent.—"My brothers," he added, "are indeed good and pious—sed hæc pusilla ad mundanas voluptates data est: tamen nutrite eam, quia homo est †." "Our Lord doth not forget the imperfect who stay behind," says Antonio de Guevara, "who through weakness do sin and offend Him. O what a great comfort it is that Christ, bearing His cross, would turn Himself to speak with those poor women who did nothing but follow, and weep a few tears behind Him ‡." Can any thing be more delicious to the heart than such remarks, justifying hopes for the future state of many on whom proud, merciless moralists look down with unmitigated scorn?

"Ah! boundless wisdom, boundless mercy, may Find, ev'n for those bewilder'd souls a way; Who knows how far transcending goodness can Extend the merits of His Son to man?"

And then the sacrifices for sinners, the prayers of the saints for sinners—which nature itself will for ever invoke—it is not the Catholic Church which prescribes limits to their efficacy. "The treasure of the Church," says Dom Louis Montegut, "consists in the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, and the satisfaction of the saints. Though the latter, in regard to the former, are but rivulets which are lost in the ocean, God, nevertheless, has chosen not to deprive the saints of the fruit of their actions, albeit He was the author of those actions; and, as they have performed works of supererogation He has willed that they should be reserved for the use of the insolvent, to pay for those who might be in arrear §." Now, a contemplative man and a logician, let him be ever so deeply impressed with a sense of the incomparable oneness of Christ's atonement, and ever so little versed in theology, would, probably, if left to himself, arrive at

<sup>\*</sup> Rhyth. Synopsis iii.

<sup>†</sup> Mag. Spec. 130.

<sup>#</sup> The Myst. of Mt. Calv.

<sup>§</sup> Hist. de N. D. du Mont. Serrat, Réflexions sur les Indulgences.

something like this very doctrine, as being necessary to explain the facts of human life, to reconcile the justice of God with His mercy, and to establish in general the truth of the Christian religion.

What, again, can be more amiable, more estimable in the eyes of men, than to be delivered from the very shade of the shadow of hypocrisy, as Christ commands \*, and as Catholicity supposes to be all its children, inspiring some with the desire of being secretly holy, as Henry Suso expresses it—"Occultè sancti;" others, with a horror of ever entering a temple, excepting like the publican; and all with that humble sentiment which may be expressed by the noble exclamation of the poet—

"Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto?"

How exquisite is that picture which the poet draws of his bride, the charm of whose character might be supposed the express result of the element we are observing!

"She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleam'd upon my sight:
A lovely apparition sent
To be a moment's ornament.
I saw her, upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too!
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles,"

What more humane than to be mindful of the fragility of our common nature, even when requiring perfection from those who embrace the spiritual state; as when the Church, in her formula of ordination, says, "Si quis habet aliquid contra illos, pro Deo et propter Deum cum fiducia exeat et dicat; verumtamen memor sit conditionis suæ?" What more agreeable to humanity than an affable and humble turn of mind, the desire of kind, familiar intercourse with the low and the obscure, loving and helping, not scorning—

"The sandal'd swain, the shepherd's boy?"

How natural are even those high impressions derived by the world from the ascetic life, which Amethus expresses in the "Lover's Melancholy," saying,

"Sister! sister!
She who derives her blood from princes, ought
To glorify her greatness by humility;"

and which Raybright gives utterance to, in language still more beautiful, saving-

"He who is high-born never mounts you battlements

Of sparkling stars, unless he be in spirit
As humble as the child of one that sweats
To eat the dear-earn'd bread of honest thrift!"

Hear the hymn of blessed Casimir, and mark how suitable to humanity are the gifts which it implores—

"Quod requiro, quod suspiro, mea sana vulnera: Et da menti te poscenti, gratiarum munera. Ut sim mitis et modestus, dulcis, blandus, sobrius: Pius, rectus, circumspectus, simultatis nescius; Constans, fervens et suavis, benignus, amabilis, Simplex, purus, eruditus, patiens, et humilis."

What more humane than that charity which makes no distinction of religion in relieving the distresses of our fellow-creatures, but produces universal benevolence, like that ascribed in old chivalrous romance to Merancie, who, we are told, always began by assisting men, and afterwards inquired as to their religion, but, whether they were Christian or Infidel, she never regretted having rendered them service? What more rational than that wisdom of life which, by the confessional turns to virtue what would grow unwholesome, as heaven's bright eye, the sun, draws up the grossest vapours, and so verifies the poet's deep remark—

## "That best men are moulded out of faults?"

The motives of this morality may be maligned, its end and object misunderstood; but no misrepresentation of its effects can prevent some of those who witness them from becoming at least its secret admirers.

St. Paulinus of Aquileia concludes his book of exhortation to the Duke Henry, by praying God to enable him "to bear an equal part in all fraternal burdens, to endeavour to do good to all, to injure none, to be adverse to no one, to calumniate no one, to offend no one, to judge no one, to explore the ways of no one, but to be watchful only over himself \*." If this be supernatural, it must be confessed that nature, without the influence of some strong counteraction

wholly unconnected with virtue, will not recoil from it. A shadowy approximation to such correction of nature seemed to Cicero a thing that he could not sufficiently recommend. "You are now less inclined to anger than you were," he writes to his brother-" nullæ tuæ vehementiores animi concitationes, nulla maledicta ad nos, nullæ contumeliæ perferantur: quæ quum abhorrent a litteris, ab humanitate, tum vero contraria sunt imperio ac dignitati. As the two first years of your government have seen you become less wrathful, more patient, and more gentle, so let the third year finish your emendation, so that not the least thing can be discovered for reproof\*." If gentleness be, as Plato says, "the mark of a philosophic character †," Catholicism, which is so calculated to produce it, can never be a legitimate object of offence to men who desire that character. If those flowers of the virtues of humanity, sweetness of temper, condescension, and love, be dear to every breast, then should their roots be prized, which are nothing else but the principles of the Catholic religion. No; a supernatural object is not productive of a harsh and repulsive morality. These true ascetics, these men of God, bless us with a human heart, with a heart in which sensibility constantly predominates. Those who hear and follow them, wear each

"A face with gladness overspread!
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred."

Those elegant portraits of the young gentlemen of the League, if placed side by side with the stern and gloomy countenances of a later epoch of social degeneracy, might lead us to reflect that grace, and beauty, and the attributes of a refined humanity, are less opposed to strength of character than the more pretensious qualities of a generation of sophists; for it is with men as with trees, in which, as foresters remark, "weakness is not a necessary consequence of lightness j." The supernatural morality of Catholicism recommends itself to all classes of persons, without excepting even those who fail in practising it through human frailty.-To the young it is endeared by its harmonious gracefulness, and soft humanity; to the thoughtful and experienced, it is congenial by reason of the depth, and breadth, and loftiness, and solidity, of its principles. Where truly known, it can offend only beings who have nothing in common with humanity, like those sophists who said that "the French are now incapable of a return to compassion-parceque de nos jours l'art social est plus avancé."

\* Ep. ad Quint.

+ De Repub. iii.

‡ Mém. Forest. ii.

Justice, according to Plato, "consists in keeping all the interior powers of man in their proper, reciprocal subjection, so that one should not encroach on the other-injustice being nothing else but a sedition between the three parts of the soul, which enables one to get the mastery over the other two, contrary to its legitimate office-from which he concludes that justice and injustice are the same in a man and in a society, or nation \*." To produce this moral equilibrium is the object and result of Catholic virtue, which, while misrepresented and maligned by those who know nothing of it, or by the sophist race and its lordly patrons, will ever be respected and admired by the eminently wise and good, who, on that point, will be found to think like the unpretending and the poor, the humble and the unhappy; as when Leibnitz, in one place using the expression, "our wisest moralists," adds, like one who felt the common bond of sympathy that unites the little and the great, "such as the present general of the Jesuits +."

To live in desire, at least secretly, like the few, exteriorly like the many, true to ourselves, as far as our frail nature will permit, while believing that each soul has a mission for the good of others, this is what nature will love, and this is the moral result of Catholicism, teaching every young man, as Alanus de Insulis

observes,-

"Interius sibimet ut pauci vivat, et extra Ut plures, intus sibi vivens, pluribus extra. Ut mundo natum se credat, ut omnibus omnis Pareat, et sapiens sese cognoscat in illo ‡."

True, its object, when profoundly viewed, is not of this world, nor confined to time, nor human, in the sense of nature fallen. It causes in man, at the bottom, the effect which Cicero considered "the mark of the best and wisest—ut nihil nisi sempiternum spectare videatur §." But the supernatural morality of Catholicism leaves all that is good in nature untouched, untrammelled, fragrant with the choicest grace and primal freshness of humanity; it leaves youth joyous; it suffers the peasant mother to equip her boy as fine on Sundays as a palm-branch. It frowns not on the cheerful; it enhances every joy, since, as Cervantes says, describing the Spanish villagers of Catholic times, "they, carrying modesty in their looks and eyes, and lightness in their feet, approved themselves the best dancers in the

\* De Repub. iv.

# Encyclopæd.

§ Pro C. Rabirio.

<sup>†</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain, liv. iv. p. 295, édit. Charpent.

world." It damps no innocent pleasure. Under its influence, indeed, as far as innocence requires, and with the distinctions which ought never to be overlooked, all the joys of the peasant maid, the holy mother, the princess or the queen, might be summed up as those of Mary, as in the old poem by Herman, entitled, "Les joies de Notre Dame"-but it leaves age serene and indulgent, manhood brave and devoted, female goodness decked with all its graces; it sours nothing, spoils nothing, misapplies nothing, effaces nothing, excepting what constitutes imperfection or deformity,-yes, and what the world itself would stigmatize as baseness and dishonour. In fine, expelling fear by fear, slavery by servitude, for, as Alanus de Insulis observes, "si vis timorem vincere, time Deum,-Deum time ne timeas,—Deo servi ne servias \*," it forms great characters, heroic, invincible: it constitutes, let the State assume what form it will, the true, valiant, indomitable race of free men, whose will is emancipated, and desire crowned; for-

> "If I have freedom of my love And in my soul am free, Angels alone that soar above Enjoy such liberty."

## CHAPTER VII.

THE LOWER ROAD OF DIVINE VIRTUE.



HERE is a kind of fear, not unmixed with compunction, accompanying the pleasure which many take in these walks, companion. But, come; a truce to what is personal! Contemplative content, the lightest men perhaps find in them. They bring into our minds oft meditations—

"So sweetly precious, that in the parting We find a shower of grace upon our cheeks, They take their leave so feelingly."

<sup>\*</sup> Sum. de Arte Prædicat. xi.

Here is another point of view which, for men of a certain class, will prove attractive. To take advantage of it, we must give our thoughts somewhat of a different direction, and remark the practical utility of the Divine virtue, which is inculcated by the Catholic Church; for this consideration itself may be said to clear a way to it through the tangled wood.

The world in general judges of all things as of trees—by the profit and practical advantage to be drawn from them; though in regard to each object, its estimate is found to vary prodigiously. It appears from a forest ordinance of the year 1144, published from the abbey of Mauer Munster, that the value of trees at that time was computed very low; for whoever wished to burn charcoal for his own use in the woods of that abbey, might erect his furnaces and cut down timber where he liked, on condition of presenting to the abbey, at Easter, a hen and five eggs. This grant included permission to cut down timber even for constructions, provided only that a return of the trees felled was made to the guards of the forest \*.

The Ripuarian laws of the fifth century indicated a very different estimate of the value of trees. The opinion of pagan hunters in this respect had differed prodigiously from that of the later monks. "If any one," said the former, "shall have caused fire to kindle in the forest, he must be cast, with hands and feet bound, thrice into the hottest part of the flame, and if he escape, he may go free. If any one, again, shall bark a tree, he shall be nailed by the navel to the same tree, and then driven round it, until all his intestines be rolled round

it †."

In Massinger's days, wooded tracts must have been deemed very useful, since "builders of iron mills, that grub up forests with timber trees for shipping," were then represented as lawful game for honourable banditti, who rank them with cormorants that grind the poor in time of famine, and grand enclosers of the commons for their private profit or delight. At all times the forest is studied chiefly with a view to the practical utility resulting from the use of its productions. Hence has arisen the forest literature, which is now so extensive, while colleges, with a view to the same object, are founded in wooded districts, as at Nancy, where, in the adjoining forests, may be met the students of the royal forest school, distinguishable by their dress of green, with two branches of oak embroidered on the breast, and two acorns on the collar. Men are not deficient in sagacity when it is a question of discovering the advantages

<sup>\*</sup> Cotta, Science Forestière, 7.

which the productions of the forest yield. This is the great question with those who are concerned with their administration. So when it is asked, "ought cedars of Lebanon to be planted in our forests?" they only require to know whether their wood can rival that of the oak, as in that event, it is concluded that they ought to be cultivated, since they do not require a good soil like the oak, and that they contain a far greater quantity of material. The only question, therefore, is, which kind of tree is the most useful? What amount of profit can be expected from the woods? Such are the points to be determined. So in England, iron, being now more used in various parts of machinery, the consequence is, that beech, which used to be employed for those purposes, was formerly much more in

request than at present.

Foresters ascertain the value of every thing contained in woods. "The bark of oaks and pines," they say, "is useful for tanning; that of walnuts and birch, for dyeing; from that of the latter, a kind of papyrus used to be made before the invention of paper. With the bark of limes and elms cords are made. The roots of the crack-willow are used for staining the Easter eggs of a purple colour. The bark of the common osier is used in curing intermittent fevers, which generally prevail in the places where it grows. The juice of the maple makes sirup; from that of the birch, which yields the mona, or sole medicine known to Finland mothers, can be extracted a drink like champagne; the foliage of the poplar is such good fodder, that a pound of the leaves of the Canada poplar is worth a pound of oats; those of the acacia are as nourishing as clover, and those of the ash-elm and lime form excellent food for cows. The spongy substance called fire-mushroom, boletus fomentarius, which grows on the trunks of trees, forms an article of commerce in one district of the forest of Lebehenker, in Saxony, which is called Zippnosche: the right of gathering this agaric amadout is let on bail for two hundred thalers annually. The profit arising from the forest bees that live in the hollow trunks of trees, and especially of pines, is so considerable, that numerous companies are established to watch over them. They have justices, a chief justice, and regular assemblies. A society of this kind in the woods of Mouskau, in Prussian Silesia, published statutes in 1644 and in 1718. Formerly, they had more than 8000 hives in trunks, which had been hollowed at an elevation of five or seven ells from the ground, a board being nailed before the aperture; for each of which they paid threepence to the proprietor of the wood. The Iceland moss which is gathered in the forest of Schenecker, is used for medicinal purposes; other kinds of forest moss are used by dyers. The production of pitch, tar,

and rosin, form a considerable source of forest utility. The extraction of vinegar from wood in the charcoal pits constitutes another source of profit. The Burgundy pitch, so used in medicine, is also a forest production. Thus are the trees found to be practically useful, without taking into account the value of charcoal, of timber for construction, and of many of the plants

which grow in such localities.

The comparative value of the different kinds of wood itself, becomes, of course, an important study. Thus Vitruvius recognized the hardness of the alder when under water, which caused it to be chosen for founding the Rialto, and strengthening the dykes in Holland; and thus the lime was called, in the days of Pliny, "the tree of a thousand uses." Under the influence, then, of desires which employ so many deep and anxious intelligences, seeking to calculate the utility of the trees, we may be expected to turn from them at this pass, and reply to those who would extend such investigations to the moral wood, requiring us to estimate, in particular, the practical utility of this supernatural virtue, which belongs to Catholicism; for in our times especially, this is a main point, to be determined by those who are invited to adout it.

In the first place, then, discarding all the higher considerations involved in the subject, and viewing it only on the human side, we may observe, that the supernatural element is practically useful in causing virtue to be more secure against the influence of passions within, and of contingency and the pressure

of events without.

"— He that gives up himself
To a true religious friend, leans not upon
A false, deceiving reed, but boldly builds
Upon a rock, which now with joy I find
In reverend Francisco——."

So says Vitelli, on finding himself delivered from prison by means of the friar; but what shall we say of him who leans upon an irreligious friend, stranger to all that is supernatural in virtue? In the world, that "aged hag, hight, occasion, the roote of all wrath and despight, moulds men as she wills; and thou, old forest, hold ye this for true:" there is, in consequence, no security for the continued exercise of any virtue, however strictly belonging even to the natural order. To lay claim to any degree of confidence, it must be raised in the heart to the mystic, heroic, or supernatural state. This is an experimental certainty. There is no baseness, no ingratitude, no injustice, of which good-natured men, that is, men only naturally

good, whether laymen or priests, may not sconer or later prove themselves capable. And hence a day will come to most men when they can say with the sorrowful poet,—

"Omnia jam fient, fieri quæ posse negabam "."

"Oh! this same coney-white takes an excellent black;
Too soon, a mischief on 't!"

"Walpole," says a great writer, "was familiar with the malice of kind people, and the perfidy of honourable people. Independent men had licked the dust before him, and patriots had begged him to come up to the price of their puffed and advertised integrity." It is only the man with more or less of consciousness directed and governed by principles that are derived from a higher source than earth, such as Catholicism imparts, who can, under every circumstance, generally be depended on. For, though his deeds may not always correspond with them, as what virtue can be uniform?

"His thoughts are like pillars of adamant, Too hard to take a new impression!"

And though he may occasionally be tossed with internal tempests,

"He is in general made of such ascending virtue, That all the powers of hell can't sink him!"

He only will be able to say, after a long life, estimating it on the whole,

"Through the high wood, oft void (the more her blame Who by the serpent was beguil'd) I pass'd With step in cadence to the harmony Angelic —— +."

Moreover, the supernatural virtue not only corrects, elevates, and perfects the best nature, but, like the pine, it seems even to be more or less indifferent to the quality of the soil that receives it, being capable of rendering useful the worst ground; and what is equally remarkable, it can be so productive even under such circumstances, as to surpass the produce of the best soils furnished with other kinds. The woods present an analogy with the fact, that the best natures, left to themselves, have a tendency to corruption, arising out of the very excellence which distinguishes them. "A certain vast oak forest used to be cut for the Paris market every eighty years. Some changes

in the administration causing parts to be cut every forty years, the wood of the latter was bought by the bidders at as high a price as the timber of eighty years; and being asked the reason, they replied, that the latter was, in fact, the best wood, and that the timber of eighty years was rotten at the heart." "I was astonished," says Varenne-Fénille, "at this premature decay of wood on so good a soil; but I found that this early and sudden alteration arose from the fertility itself of the soil. All the sprouts, while young, increase alike, and very fast, and so robe each other of nourishment; and being of equal strength, none of them are smothered, while all are impoverished. So they languish; and decay at the heart is an inevitable result.

In the second place, this mystic, heroic, or supernatural life, is practically useful in clearing the judgment, even of the most acute and powerful minds, while it has been known to develop the understanding of men naturally deficient in a most remarkable way; as when Peter I., abbot of Morimond, who, while at the schools in Paris,—ab omnibus irridebatur, ab omnibus idiota judicabatur, became, after he had embraced a religious life in Morimond, as eminent for his intellectual attainments as for his piety \*. But a practical result still more important, is this, that by means of the supernatural principles, men can be preserved from the manifold delusions and mistakes to which the natural state, whatever be its capacities, is liable; for, to use the language of an old author, "truth, I know not how, hath this unhappiness fatal to her, ere she can come to the trial and inspection of the understanding; being to pass through many little wards and limits of the several affections and desires, she cannot shift it, but must put on such colours and attire as those pathetic handmaids of the soul please, to lead her into the queen: and if she find so much favour with them, they let her pass in her own likeness; if not, they bring her into the presence habited and coloured like a notorious falsehood. And contrary, when any falsehood comes that way, if they like the errand she brings, they are so artful to counterfeit the very shape and visage of truth, that the understanding, not being able to discern the fucus which these enchantresses, with such cunning, have laid upon the feature, sometimes of truth, sometimes of falsehood interchangeably, sentences for the most part one for the other at the first blush, according to the subtle imposture of these sensual mistresses, that keep the ports and passages between her and the object."

The supernatural, heroic spirit expels the wily arbitresses, who in most men have the sole ushering of truth and falsehood between the senses and the soul; and what can be more practi-

<sup>\*</sup> Dubois, Hist. de l'Abbaye de Morimond, 154,

cally useful than this service? Is it not well to be delivered from seeing truth and honour, virtue and duty, as through the dim glass of personal affections, which in this frail mansion of flesh are ever unequally composed, pushing forward to error and vice, and keeping back from truth and virtue ofttimes the best of men? Catholicism thus, by its positive morality, can best and most securely teach what honour is; for, as says the poet,—

"Honour consists not in a bare opinion
By doing any act that feeds content,
Brave in appearance, 'cause we think it brave;
Such honour comes by accident, not nature,
Proceeding from the vices of our passion,
Which makes our reason drunk: but real honour
Is the reward of virtue, and acquired
By justice or by valour, which, for bases
Hath justice to uphold it ——.
Thus, as you see how honour must be grounded
On knowledge, not opinion (for opinion
Relies on probability and accident,
But knowledge on necessity and truth),
I leave thee to the fit consideration
Of what the grace of real honour needs."

Those, therefore, who adopt the supernatural principles, are found to defy that tyranny of opinion which enslaves many at the present day, who are so press-ridden, that they cannot think or speak for themselves, being condemned to adopt implicitly the ideas of their newspaper, and to re-echo the words which it puts in their mouths; while, in consequence of wanting the true deliverer of the judgment, those journals that express the bitterest scorn for what is holy, the most detestable obduracy in setting at nought the cause of justice with the weak, are pronounced to be the best written, to contain the ablest articles, to be conducted by the most superior men, by men who give the most decided proof of extraordinary talent, and so on, in varied phraseology, praised by their enslaved admirers; while the fact, perhaps, is, as the Count de Maistre observes, that "corrupted judgments, being almost always false, and the first element of taste being good morals, it follows that men, like the writers of the journals, who in general may be said to reject supernatural virtue, must deceive their readers a little on every subject, and that they are to be believed implicitly in regard to nothing, -not more on a book of philosophy than on a song, not more on a work of legislation than on a romance \*."

Dom Mabillon, during his last sickness, hearing two persons

speak of the news of the day, repeated, with a sigh, the words of the Psalm, "narraverunt mihi iniqui fabulationes, sed non ut lex tua, Domine." The Count de Maistre observes an instance that occurred in London, which he styles "the abode of the most profound knowledge, and of the most incredible prejudices," when in 1808, in the common council, the anniversary of the taking of the Bastile was classed in the same rank with the day which beheld the Spanish people rising to commence the war of deliverance for their country in the name of their king; which assimilation elicits from him these words. "I have read some pages in the course of my life, but I do not remember having ever witnessed such a prostitution of human reason as the speech which declared these two events of equal glory \*."

How many men, including statesmen, have their eyes totally closed in regard to the social, political, and religious evils of division and separation on matters of religion, who need but a supernatural direction of mind to see clearly the injustice from which it originates, and the misery attending its permanent establishment. "They do not know this serpent," says the Count de Maistre, "they take it, at the very worst, for an eel †." How many men nurse rationalism with the fondness of a parent, advising the State to profess the maxims that undermine itself. For the professors whose pupils are to practise insurrection, the State is willing to make the greatest sacrifices. It throws money to them in profusion. It has provision for their wives and children, for all their wants, for all their pleasures. "Truly," adds this deep observer, "I doubt whether, in all history, there can be found another example of such blind infatuation. What sortilege is this! By what inexplicable fatality do governments love only what is their destruction, and hate only that which can save them !"

Recurring to more tranquil themes, let us hear Cæsar of Heisterbach relating an instance of the evil of private men being influenced by such guides. There were no journals when he wrote in the eleventh century, but with less facilities there were still evil communications, to which men could trace their decep-"A scholar of Cologne," he says, "in his fourteenth year, the son of one of the citizens, had an extreme love for our order. This year, when the ships of the order did not dare to pass by Zeeland, through fear of pirates, a rumour reached Cologne that they had been all plundered, and some said, 'it is a just event, the monks are avaricious; they are merchants. God could not endure their avarice.' By hearing such words, the said boy was moved to great anger, so that, contracting a hatred against the order, he became a detractor of the religious life, and could not so much as see, with an equal eye, a monk or a lay brother. One night, in a dream, he seemed to stand before an image of the mother of God, who, with the Divine child, looked at him with displeasure, saying, 'Bad boy, you calumniate my best friends.' He awoke with terror, and from

that hour resumed his former love for monks \*."

Palafox, in his Spiritual Journey, represents the palace of the science of salvation as adjoining the palace of the spirit of the world. But, he says, "there was this difference, that from the windows of the former you could see all that passed in the latter, while, on the contrary, from this latter you could not see any thing that passed in the former." So it is in the world, when faith casts her serene and blissful glance over earthly things. What was confusion to the children of earth, grows distinct and plain before her; and she can almost always point out the right way, even in regard to temporal affairs, because she looks upon the labyrinth from above, without being herself entangled in it. At Hampton Court, it is a gardener's boy, he seeks no better name, who from a height directs by nods and shakes of his head the visitors who are losing themselves in the maze. And so the proud, wise men of the world, going wrong in the labyrinth of life, can be often guided by the simplest, who, through the heat of conflict,

"—— Keeps the law,
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw."

"Vidi angelum descendentem de cœlo habentem clavem abyssi," on which words St. Anthony of Padua commenting, adds, "the angel is a just man, who truly may be said to descend from heaven, when he makes his life on earth conformable to the purity of heaven. He has the key and the chain of the abyss. The key is discretion, with which the just man opens and shuts the abyss of thoughts †." St. Bonaventura ascribes this power to that contemplation of the passion from which the whole supernatural life virtually proceeds. "Hujus enim passionis Christi meditatio continua," he says, "mentem elevabit, quid agendum, quid meditandum, quidque sciendum et sentiendum sit, indicabit ‡."

A certain learned man of Placentia, who rather despised St. Peter of Alcantara, thinking him a holy but simple man, having promised some friends to make proof of his opinion, went to confession to him, and proposed certain captious, subtle ques-

tions which the saint answered with such facility, that the false penitent was converted into a true one, weeping and imploring forgiveness, after which time he wholly changed his life\*. Thus was seen verified what St. Francis said, "that holy wisdom confounds Satan and all his malice; that holy, pure simplicity confounds all the wisdom of this world, and the wisdom of the flesh; that holy poverty confounds pride and all the honours of this world †."

An instance in which the practical bearing and usefulness of the ascetic principle were shown in a more striking way, occurs in the Magnum Speculum. "In France," says that old writer, "a grievous discord broke out between an abbot and a certain powerful lord. It was a question of property, and the trial by battle was ordained. When the day came, the field was all bristling with spears and swords; the warlike clamour resounded far and near. All were waiting anxiously to see the opposite party advance, when, lo! the abbot, trusting not in human aid, but in the Author of human salvation, prohibited his men to march; and then, at the head of his monks, alone, covered with their hoods, he rode to the spot, having the cross for standard. When this pacific, instead of a hostile troop, was seen, as if beholding an angelic army, a Divine fear came on all, and, leaping from their horses, they prostrated themselves on the

ground, and gave up the point at issue."

But hear another instance of an older date. A certain acute philosopher long resisted all the eloquence and dialectics of the most learned men in the Council of Nice, till at length a very sensible man, knowing nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, seeing the insulting triumph of the philosopher, asked leave to reply to him, which the Fathers gave with fear and reluctance. Then he began, "In the name of Jesus Christ, philosopher, hear what is true. There is one God who created, and one Son who redeemed, the world. Dost thou believe this, philosopher?" And he, as if he had never learned to contradict, stupified with the power of the words, replied, "So it seemed to be." Then said the father, "rise in that case, and follow me to the Lord's fold, and take this sign of faith." Then the philosopher, turning to his disciples, said, "hear me, O ve learned men; while they attacked me with words, I found words to oppose to words; but when virtues and not words came from them, words could not resist virtues, nor could man contend with God." Thus did the philosopher confess himself vanquished, and so become a Christian 1.

<sup>\*</sup> Marchese, Vit. du Saint. iv. 17.

<sup>\*</sup> Bucchius, Liber Conform. &c. 186.

<sup>#</sup> Euseb. lib. viii. c. 1.

In fine, we may remark, that Catholicism preserves the great landmarks of morality from being removed in the mind even when a temporary deviation from it occurs in practice. Though its disciples may have been hurried into vices, they have never approved, and they never will approve a vicious character.

Proceeding to another consideration, we may, thirdly, remark, the utility of supernatural principles in producing independent characters, neither the slaves nor the despisers of men's opinion, who neither seek nor reject the good of reputation. "The world is suspicious, and men may think what we imagine not." It is good to attach no supreme importance to its judgment. It is useful to be able to say truly,—

" Non ego ventosæ plebis suffragia venor;"

for then one has roots which will sustain the soul,-

"Arbor quæ late ramat, nisi firma sit imo, Cum ramis facili corruit icta Notho. Sed quæ radices habet in tellure profundas Obstat, et evelli peste furente nequit. Qui ramos famæ, non radices meritorum Extendit latè, scito quod ipse cadet \*."

In old chivalrous romance, Ogier is represented saying on one occasion, that "he would infinitely prefer to be accused of treason, and suspected of betraying the king's cause, than to commit a base act in order to avoid the charge." It is well to avoid, on the other hand, the pride of those who do not respect their own reputation. The Catholic combines the two qualities, avoiding to give scandal, and yet, if it will follow him, content to bequeath his fame to memory and Time's old daughter, Truth,—

"Nec petat impelli populari laude, nec ipsam Respuat oblatam, nisi sit velata colore Hypocrisis, verbo quærens emungere lucrum. Nam nimis austerum redolet, qui despicit omnem Famam, mollescitque ninis qui singula famæ. Blandimenta petit, populari deditus auræ †."

How many worship reputation, and think, by putting off humanity, to win it! The poet enumerates their titles, and demands,

"Why are they proud? Again we ask aloud Why, in the name of glory, are they proud?"

<sup>\*</sup> Alani Parabol.

It is a remark of Cervantes, which in more recent times has been suggested to many who seem to have forgotten a passage where it was admirably stated, that "after all, it is the saints of the Catholic Church who have obtained the greatest glory upon earth. His fame who cures the sick, before whose sepulchre lamps are continually burning, and whose chapels are crowded, his fame, I say, shall be greater, both in this world and in the next, than that which all the heathen emperors, and knights, and, we may truly add, all the ledger men achieving capital in the world, ever had, or ever shall have." The inference, therefore, of the famous squire is, that he and his master had better turn saints immediately, and they shall then attain to that renown they aim at.

But independent of this consideration, it must be admitted that to make men independent of the world, is to render them a real practical service; for nothing can be more useful, than that perfect justice, which St. Gregory says "consists in living in the world, and having nothing of the concupiscence of the world; in not seeking what belongs to others, and not fearing to lose one's own, in despising the praises of this world, and in loving reproach for Christ's sake." It is well to resemble the lily on the running waters—"quasi lilia in transitu aquæ—the lily," says St. Anthony of Padua, "is the pure soul, the passing

water, worldly prosperity \*."

Catholicism comprises that lofty sentiment expressed by the Count de Maistre, that "honour and reason are our own, but that the rest does not depend upon ourselves." This is the spirit of the old chivalry. In the Four Sons of Aymon, Charlemagne is represented making a proposal to Archbishop Turpin, which the latter deemed dishonourable. "But," said the king, "I will make you pope." "I would not accept the office on such terms," replied Turpin, "even though you should add thereto France and the empire. That which is evil, all the empires in the world could not convert into good." Alanus de Insulis enumerates some of the advantages of despising the world, which are all sufficiently practical. "O homo, si mundana et vana contempseris, non te timor concutiet, non laxabit spes, non arctabit tristitia, non dissolvet lætitia; nulli servies, liber eris, adversitatis non timebis insultum, serena tibi conscientia erit, pacifice mortis expectabis adventum, mors grata, post mortem expectatio beata. Si vero mundanis voluptatibus adhæseris, terrenis irretitus illecebris, erit tibi conscientia cauteriata, mors invisa, post mortem concluderis pænâ æternâ †."

<sup>\*</sup> Serm. Dom. xii. post Trin. † Summa de Arte Prædicatoria, c. 3.

Again, discarding still the highest considerations, must not men admit that it is useful to be preserved from becoming an accuser of others, to prevent the growth of which odious character, we read that St. Ignatius of Loyola required all accusations to be presented in a written form; and further, that it is a most practical service to render men indifferent to calumny, since "nulla tam modesta felicitas est, quæ malignitatis dentes vitare possit?" The supernatural element makes men docile to receive correction; and we see what advantage that disposition confers on those who, by a happy disposition, are induced to imitate, in this respect, the practice of religion. How men are struck, for instance, at seeing Raphael, when at the height of his renown, and covered with honours by the sovereign pontiff, evincing such modesty and affability, such anxiety to take advice, to listen to objections, and such gratitude for being corrected!

Fourthly, the supernatural element confers an immense benefit by rendering men apt to profit by occasions, and able to make use of them in the right way. When man is in that state which disposes him for receiving the impressions of heaven, he is ready to act heroically well as soon as an opportunity presents itself. Whereas, in the contrary condition, without the influence of the supernatural principle, it is the excuse which is always ready. The man can see a reason for failing in every thing at the right moment. The current of the false maxims of the world is too strong for him; but if he had been self-collected at the time, and furnished with the supernatural motive, he would have resisted that current, and imitated the best examples. How useful is it to possess that sense of opportunity which, when evinced even by men who are not under the supernatural influence, extorts the admiration of all beholders! An instance occurred on the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, when Louis XVIII. sent back to the king of Spain the decoration of the order of the golden fleece, with which Bonaparte was invested, saying, that "there could be nothing in common between himself and the great criminal;" an example of the old honour which was followed by Gustavus Adolphus, who also returned to the king of Prussia the cordon of the black eagle for the same reason, saying that "according to the laws of chivalry he could not be brother in arms of a murderer." Singular allusion in such an age! and one that may call attention to the possibility indicated by Cervantes, of composing books of chivalry by rules that would render them agreeable, and even useful, to many persons.

The supernatural morality of Catholicism, being conducted by unswerving principles, enables men in this manner to act well, opportunely, traditionally, and even when the action that ensues might be qualified as an anachronism, to leave an example which must captivate the admiration of every one pos-

sessing a noble mind.

Fifthly, the utility of this influence is seen in rendering men brave, frank, and noble; for all that is manly it encourages, but what is weak and effeminate, it disowns. The fig-tree, the "inutile lignum" of Horace, is allowed by all foresters to be soft, weak, easily split, and the worst of all kinds of wood. Such is not the timber that Catholicism forms. We find that this latter is useful for all purposes, and for none more so than for such as demand high valour; for he cannot fear who builds on noble grounds. "My brother," said Richard to Renaud de Montauban, when the latter exhorted his troops to have courage and prudence, "courage is never wanting in those who aim at glory,—

'When councils fail, and there's in man no trust, Even then an arm from heaven fights for the just."

Such is the spirit that pervades the forest here. How many men have distinguished themselves, even in the sphere of art, from having acted under the inspiration of faith? Philippo Brunelleschi, when it was a question of constructing the dome of Santa Maria del Fiore at Florence, after remarking that the difficulty of the enterprise appeared to him prodigious, concluded with these words, "yet remembering that this is a Church consecrated to God in honour of the blessed Virgin, I confidently trust that, for a work executed to the Divine glory, knowledge will not fail to be infused where it is wanting, and strength, wisdom, and genius bestowed on him who shall be author of such a work."

Well might the ascetic say, "amor Jesu nobilis, ad magna operanda impellit, et ad desideranda semper perfectiora excitat. -Valet ad omnia, et multa implet, effectui mancipat, ubi non amans deficit et jacet." In the moral order, all ancient European history abounds with examples of the grandeur which attends actions inspired by the old Catholic sense of duty, which are admirable even in the eves of those who deem that, on the particular occasion, it was mistaken in its estimate of men; as when Achille de Harlay, walking in his garden, received the visit of a hostile duke, who had figured at the barricades from which the king had retired, and the grave magistrate continued his walk, saying with a loud voice, when he saw him approach, "c'est grand pitié que le valet chasse le maistre; au reste, mon âme est à Dieu, mon cœur est à mon roy, et mon corps est entre les mains des méchans; qu'on en fasse ce qu'on voudra."

This invincible constancy—the "mens æqua in arduis," does not

belong to the man only naturally honest, whose variations render very conspicuous the utility of a deliverance from such falls as the modern civilization witnesses.

On the 19th of March, Bonaparte being at the gates of Paris, Benjamin Constant signed an article ending with these words, "je n'irai pas, misérable transfuge, me trainer d'un pouvoir à l'autre, couvrir l'infamie par le sophisme, et balbutier des mots profanes pour racheter une vie honteuse." On the 20th, he changed his part, and made his submission to Bonaparte\*. It is useful to be trained "to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest man, a soldier, and not to use words like a very fan-

tastical banquet."

It is useful, also, to be impressed with a sense of the duty of not succumbing to an unjust attack upon the general good; and Catholicism actually comes in aid to men that would otherwise waver, and produces these results. St. Gertrude, fearing that concord would be disturbed in her own mind by the contradictions of some who were opposed to the religious state, "heard," she says, "our Lord replying, 'the virtue of concord is not forfeited when man resists injustice +.'" The supernatural element not only impels, but also assists men to persevere in such contests. It causes the mind to resemble one of those feudal castles of old Norman skill, in which the passages were so constructed, that if the garrison should be obliged to take refuge through them in the keep, the soldiers might fly to several successive stages, each rising above the other, from which they could take up positions which, by their elevation, would give them a command over their assailants.

Sixthly, the practical utility of the same element, appears in the patience and calm fortitude with which it enables men to meet the injustice of the world, and the calamities of life. The fatum Christianum wholly differs from the fatum Mahometanum and the fatum Stoicum. Those who submit to it act by a knowledge of the Divine perfections, from which the love of God flows, and not only evince patience like the Stoic philosophers, but show that they are content with what the providence of God ordains, knowing that it is for the best, not alone in general, but

for the individual.

"Every one should read," says Leibnitz, "the book by Cardan—'de Utilitate ex Adversis Capienda,' and that by Novarinus—'de Occultis Dei Beneficiis.'" The utility on which these authors treat, involves a consideration of the advantage resulting from the supernatural principles which are provided for the occasions that they describe. As an instance, one may refer to the letter which Sir Thomas More wrote to

<sup>\*</sup> Chateaub. Mém. d'Outre Tombe. vol. vi.

his wife, in 1528, after the burning of his house at Chelsea: "Sith it hath liked God," he says, "to send us such a chaunce, we must and are bounden not only to be content, but also to be glad of His visitation. He sente us all that we have loste; and sith He hath, by such a chaunce taken it away againe, His pleasure be fulfilled. And, peradventure, we have more cause to thank Him for our loss than for our winning; for His wisdom better seeth what is good for us than we do ourselves. I pray you to make some good ensearche what my poor neighbours have loste, and bid them take no thought therfor: for, and I shold not leave myself a spone, there shall no poore nighbour of mine bere no loss by any chaunce happened in my house!" This spirit attends Catholicism in every age. "Some readers," says Gerbet, alluding to his own work, "will think perhaps that the preceding pages present a singularity, as having been written in these times of revolution. The world seems to shake from its foundations; and we are calmly writing the theory of a genuflexion; but so it is with us Catholics. We have been always made thus. It is a family tradition. The popes of the catacombs made rules respecting holy water; after the agony of the Roman empire, Gregory II. picked up a pen among the ruins of Italy, to write an ordonnance about the lamps of a tomb; and when society is convulsed, the priest is no less attentive each morning to consult the rubrics in order to recite his breviary on the crater of a volcano." It is a remark by Peter of Blois, "that they who regulate the passions through piety are more qualified than all others for most things, inasmuch as they have gained more power over their own wills \*." This victory—the grand desideratum where faith is lost—is never more useful than when occasions are presented of enduring wrong or sorrow. How useful, then, to be able to practise the maxim which James Bordingus had always on his tongue-

> "Nobile vincendi genus est patientia; vincit Qui patitur; si vis vincere, disce pati +!"

Antiquity never found but two men of even temper in all varieties of fortune, Socrates, in Greece, and Lelius, in the Roman republic. What do not men owe to principles which, in every Christian age, produce, in all walks of life, the man and woman amidst all trials as calm as virtue? "Passion exaggerates," says the Père de Ligny. "Envy made the disciples of St. John the Baptist say, 'Et omnes veniunt ad eum,' because many went with him; and an impassioned zeal for our Lord's

<sup>\*</sup> Pet. Bles. de Amicit. Christ.

<sup>+</sup> Richebourg, Ultima Verba, &c.

glory made John say, 'Et testimonium ejus nemo accipit,' because all did not receive it." If the imagination be admitted to colour facts, Catholicism would employ it after the manner of Cervantes, representing injuries as only so many enchantments with which it would be to no purpose to be out of humour or angry, since, being invisible and fantastical only, we should find nothing to be revenged on, though we endeavoured it never so much. Bear free and patient thoughts, says Catholicism. "Passus injuriam, taceat," says the rule of St. Columban \*. And, again, "Verbum contra verbum ex contentione, centum plagis †." And, again, "Qui se excusaverit, non filius Dei spiritalis sed Adam carnalis judicetur ‡." "What surprised Pilate," says the Père de Ligny, "was the silence of patience. A silence of disdain or pride would have exasperated him; a silence of weakness would have moved him to compassion. The silence of our Lord struck him with awe." This is the spirit which has been transmitted through all ages of the Church to the man Catholic in his heart; and who is there that can appreciate fully its immense results? See what an advantage it conferred on that old historian Jocelin, of Brakelond, in the twelfth century, when describing the afflicting times of a bad government in his abbey, he only says, "This is the hour of darkness; this is the hour when flatterers rule and are believed, and their might is strengthened, and we cannot strive against it; these things must be borne with for a time. 'Let the Lord look upon it and judge." Compare this sentence with the profound letter of the Count de Maistre, in which he exposes the absurdity of changing a dynasty every time that the ruler happens to be bad. What dignity do not even princes in the world draw from Catholicism when transferring its exercise to the affairs of state, and acting as if their daily prayer was that of Savonarola, "Da nobis fortitudinem ne infelicitas inimicorum nobis sit gaudio, et amicorum felicitate nimium elevemur; sed utrumque forti et æquo animo feramus \( \)!" " Philip II., to the astonishment of the courtiers," says Pierre Mathieu, "betrayed no joy or emotion on hearing of the victory of Lepanto, but only said, 'Don Juan risked much;' and when another courier brought him the news of the loss of that great naval armament, instead of betraying grief, he replied, 'that he had sent it against men, not against storms and seas;' and when the general of that army, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, desired to know if he might wait on him, to give him the account, he answered, 'that he should first repose himself before he came to court." In recent times, the inter-

<sup>\*</sup> Ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg.

<sup>+</sup> Reg. S. Columb. Poenitentialis.

<sup>‡</sup> Id. x. § Orationis Dom. Explan.

view between Charles X. and Chateaubriand, in the old castle of Prague, presents an affecting instance of the utility resulting from the supernatural views imparted by Catholicity. "Comment se portent vos amis, les Bertin?" said the king. "Ils n'ont pas à se plaindre de moi, vous le scavez : ils sont bien rigoureux envers un homme banni qui ne leur a fait aucun mal. du moins que je sache. Mais, mon cher, je n'en veux à personne. Chacun se conduit comme il l'entend." "This sweetness of temper," adds the narrator, "this Christian gentleness, in a chased and calumniated king, brought tears into my eyes. I wished to say somewhat respecting Louis Philippe. 'Ah!' replied the king, 'M. le Duc d'Orleans-he has judged-que voulez-vous? Les hommes sont comme ca.' Not a bitter word, not a reproach, not a murmur could escape the lips of the old man, three times exiled. And yet French hands had smitten off the head of his brother, and pierced the heart of his son-so remindful and implacable have been these hands for him!"

Seventhly,—reflecting men can never be indifferent to the utility resulting from that government of the passions which the supernatural element involves. Here, there is no need of many words; a look at one who passes will suffice to unfold the use of

the restraint that he chooses to renounce,

"Alas! poor mortal, He looks not like the ruins of his youth, But like the ruins of those ruins."

And even where such monitors are not beheld, reason and experience have but one testimony, to teach us how much cause there is to fight with weakness.

"Minutes are number'd by the fall of sands
As by an hourglass; the span of time
Doth waste us to our graves, and we look on it:
An age of pleasures, revell'd out, comes home
At last, and ends in sorrow; but the life,
Weary of riot, numbers every sand,
Walling in sighs, until the last drop down;
So to conclude calamity in rest."

What an echo does the conscience yield to such complaints! and how natural is it to turn from the road which yields them to the path of noble virtue, where the end is so different! Truly, on no side does the practical utility of Divine virtue appear more plain.

Nor, eighthly, will attentive observers overlook the advantages resulting from that dominion over the tongue which has been remarked as belonging to the supernatural morality of Catholics. What more practical good than to be delivered from the manifold evil which it provides against? Addison, when showing that most of the vexations of life proceed from calumnies and reproaches, refers his reader, for a preservative,

to the rules "of the celebrated Abbey of La Trappe."

"According to doctors," says St. Bonaventura, "there are twenty-two sins of the tongue all prohibited, namely, blasphemy, murmuring, defence of sin, perjury, lying, detraction, accusation, garrulity, idle words, scurrility, quæ ad rem non pertinet, indiscretion, vehemency, crushing abuse, derision of the good, bad advice, to sow discord, malediction, adulation, the sin of a double tongue, rumour, boasting, and the revelation of a secret \*." Such are the consequences of rejecting the supernatural discipline in this respect, and of saying, as Plato remarks, according to the expression of Æschylus, "Let us utter whatever comes to our tongue." To estimate the benefit, in this respect, which Catholicism provides, and the utility resulting from it, we need only call to mind what we observed lately, when this feature of the supernatural morality was observed with more minuteness than we have now time to employ. The advantage resulting to the individual himself, of following such rules as St. Ephrem lays down, must be obvious to whoever hears them. He says, " If you hear or see some one speaking or acting indecorously, attend to yourself, and leave them to themselves; for you should never judge them, however they may trifle or speak, since you know not how they live in secret †." Certainly it is an advantage also to be prevented from ever indulging in that cruel irony, in condemning which the same holy father is so inflexible. "There is a laugh," he says, "which excites anger-when you laugh to deride; for 'stultus in risu operatur mala,' as the wise man saith; but you, brother, should mingle the medicine of charity in the bond of peace. For fire does not extinguish fire. You should not laugh so, but endeavour to repress the impetus of the angry demon by charity, gravity, and longanimity; and if your smiles should not edify your brother, you must appease him by other manners ‡."

In general it is obvious, that whatever causes the promotion of charity and kindness, in conversation or writing, to be felt as an object of personal interest, must be considered a thing highly useful to society; and this is a result of embracing the Catholic doctrine, supposing men to act consistently with it. Those indulgences granted by Pius V. to all brothers and sisters of the rosary, as often as they should restore peace between

<sup>\*</sup> S. Bonaventur. Diœtæ Salutis, tit. iii. c. 7.

<sup>+</sup> Paræneses ad Mon. iv.

persons at discord, and make agreement between enemies \*, are to be viewed also as instruments of a social utility, the value of

which, in fact, are beyond appreciation.

Again, descending to consequences more minute, the useful action of the supernatural element can be traced in conducing to civility and politeness, which are qualities, after all, of no small importance, resulting, from its action, in a manuer so direct and immediate, that curiosity itself must be awakened at the evidence of the fact supplied by daily experience. The politeness of national manners seems to depend greatly upon the Catholicity of a people. Those nations like the French, Irish, Italian, and Spanish, in which faith has sunk deepest, and reigned undisputed during the longest period, are, by the consent of all men, the most polite. Of course, there will always be exceptions in consequence of the varieties of nature; the natural sweet disposition and good temper of some races, like the English, conspicuous among the lower classes, will no doubt more than compensate for a defect in the form; but-cæteris paribus-it is the supernatural element which determines manners. Certainly no one well advised would ever proceed to a Protestant country to find affability in the great, and politeness in the low. The genuine root of such plants has generally been taken away with Catholicity, and social manners will present an analogy with what we observe in forests, where trees of the fir kind will not live with the epicia, nor the maritime with the wood-pine, leaving us to contrast such incompatibility of disposition with the sociable friendliness of the oak, which lives in the company of all kinds of trees, being surrounded also with a great variety, even of its own immediate family. The intimate connexion between politeness and the supernatural morality of Catholicism, has not, perhaps, in general been sufficiently remarked; though to trace the minute intersections of these branches would be an interesting study. It must be remembered, that the supernatural element absolutely requires, as part of religion, the adoption of those manners which in the world are merely traced to a polite education, and the custom of good society; both of these being obliged to recur to Catholicism for their own specific distinctions. Proof of the fact is found in every pious book that Catholicism inspires. Of course kindness, forbearance, and attention to the wants of others, ought to be a necessary consequence of the Catholic religion, which ever holds a file to polish roughest customs, but it may be well to remark with what minuteness even the forms of politeness are positively taught. The rules for a cloister might be

<sup>\*</sup> Leonard, Foss. Grani-Aquens. de Rosario.

thought rules for a court. "There are some things," says an old monastic code, "which seem little, and yet their observance or neglect can demonstrate a fervent or tepid mind, as the bending of the head, and the affable salutation of words \*." The cellaress of the convent must never disturb any of the sisters, old or young—et si aliqua sororum ab ea irrationabiliter aliquid poposcerit, leni responsione cum voce humilitatis contra

rationem petenti deneget †." "The cellaress must be mild-et si non habeat, quod ab ea quæritur, quod tribuat, sermone leni sine ulla asperitate in responsione procedat: ut dulcedo cordis et vocis responsione patefiat ‡." "If you travel," says another rule, "with one who is your senior, do not walk before him. If any one older than you should rise up to speak to others, do not remain sitting, but stand up also, until he signifies to you that you may be seated \( \)." "Ne bibas aquam avidè nec cum sonitu ||." In the world, even, as in France at least, when any one drank water out of the time of meals, he was enjoined to take it unobtrusively, turning his face from those present. To be humble to the low (no small part of politeness) is expressly enjoined. "Beatus servus," says Henry Suso, addressing all his brethren, "qui ita inventus est humilis inter subditos fratres suos, sicut quando esset inter prælatos et dominos suos."

The rule of Cassian requires a monk never to keep any one waiting at the door of his cell, but commands him to run—"summa velocitate prosiliens," immediately when he hears some one knock at the door. If he is writing, he is required to leave a letter of the alphabet unfinished, that so much delay may not take place as would be necessary to complete it ¶. All singularity is to be avoided, according to the Catholic discipline;—all affectation in voice, manners, and opinions, is to be suppressed \*\*. When a brother has occasion to knock at another's cell, he is enjoined to knock modestly and gently,—

"Si ter pulsanti nemo responderit Intra Absentem, aut tibi non posse vacare puta ++."

"In travelling," we read again, "salute all whom you meet with piety, and so be a good odour of Christ to all ‡‡." St. Odo remarks a breach of politeness in one of the friends of Job.

<sup>\*</sup> Regula cujusdam, c. xxii. ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg.

<sup>+</sup> Regula cujusdam, c. 4. ‡ Regula cujusdam, c. 4.

<sup>§</sup> Regula Isaiæ, Abb. xxxix. ap. id. | Id. xx ¶ Lib. iv. cap. 12.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Hæftenus, Œconomiæ Monast. lib. iv. 7.

<sup>++</sup> Id. x. 3. ## viii. 4.

"Heliu," he says, "utters a true sentence, but he was wrong in addressing it to blessed Job; for in every discourse we must attend to what is said, to the person to whom it is said, and to the manner in which it is said \*."

Were the Catholic element to prevail, we should lose an entire category of persons who are generally distinguished for neglecting the acts of self-sacrifice which politeness requires; for then the words of St. Gregory would be remembered, "vacare vobis liberum est à conjugalibus vinculis, sed non vacare vobis liberum est à vinculo charitatis." In general, securing politeness in the daily intercourse of those who inhabit one house, Catholicism inculcates the lesson taught by our old dramatist, saying, that "what is gracious abroad, must be in private practised."

private practised.

Finally, we may remark, that the lives of Catholics, and the manners of all who are influenced by the supernatural morality, enable us to observe politeness, and the most refined civility in action. Mark, for instance, that aged cardinal officiating in some public ceremony, which is for a few moments disturbed by the intrusion of strangers, causing a kind of uproar at the lower end of the church. While others involuntarily look round, and express, by their countenances, how much they condemn such conduct; he never once turns his head, even where unrestrained by the rubric, to learn what is passing. Alone unmoved, placid and smiling, he proceeds as if nothing had happened, convincing every one who watches him, by such tranquility, that he is long accustomed to the world and its circumstances, and that he considers all that happens in a crowd with easy indifference, as a matter of course, which concerns neither religion nor himself. Certainly nothing can more clearly indicate the superiority of his social position than this high-wrought, stately, yet unconscious

But take an instance from an old author, of the politeness of style in literature, resulting from the supernatural impression. Cæsar of Hiesterbach will name no person or place if by doing so the least pain, as a remote consequence, may result to others. "Loquendo vel scribendo," he says, "de hujusmodi tragædiis mefandis, invitus exprimo nomina locorum vel personarum, sive ordinis qualitatem, ne per hoc aliquam religiosis videar inferre verecundiam †." In fact, he does not name them. In the history of St. Francis, instances are multiplied. Thus we read that "as the religious were one night asleep, one of them began to cry aloud; that St. Francis, rising up and finding that it was through hunger, brought food to him; and in order that he might not be ashamed to eat at such an hour, and alone,

<sup>\*</sup> Mor, in Job xxiv,

that he ordered a table to be prepared, whereon he meant to eat himself with all the other religious. Another time, brother Silvester being sick, and expressing a wish for grapes, the holy father led him into a vineyard near the convent, where, that he should not be ashamed, he began himself to eat grapes, and then gave some to the brother\*." Thus that delicate attention to the wants of others, which passes in the world for proof of the highest breeding, can be seen emanating immediately from religion itself, so as to merit literally the praise of the poet Massinger, where he speaks of

"One who stole courtesy from heaven."

We need not remain to insist upon the utility which results from politeness; the neglect of which, as far as they could conceive the virtue, was regretted even by the pagans, as in the instance supplied by the poet, of one who departs without taking leave, saying,

"Inque-salutatam linquo +."

It is sufficient to remark the connexion which exists between civility and the great doctrines on which depend the social and political security of men. Politeness is not a production, as foresters might say, like the horse-chesnut, which is only good for ornament, the wood being not even useful for firing, neither its leaves nor its fruit being worth any thing. It is a solid and most important acquisition of practical and daily use; for, as a writer of the thirteenth century says, "je dy et vous le trouverez que vos pères et mères, vos sœurs et vos frères vous estrangeront si vous leur estes farouche et ne leur soiez débonnaire et obéissant ‡." Politeness is a form of charity, and it is impossible to promote it in a genuine state without cherishing the element which gives it birth. The stress laid upon this action is not puerile; for, as a celebrated author remarks, "the political state itself is interested in its maintenance, since," as he says, "it can hardly continue to exist with great inequalities of fortune, if religion be no longer there with its lessons of charity and condescension for the rich, and its hopes beyond this world for the poor, to explain the sacrifice." Quite recently an eloquent and noble voice has been raised to regret that ancient French society, "which had for its characteristics simplicity, the perfection of language, politeness, the habit of respect, the empire of religion; in which every one, from the king to the lowest subject, had some one to respect; and the traditions of feudality

<sup>\*</sup> Br. Weston, Examples upon the Rules of St. Francis, c.6. † Æn. ix. 288. 

‡ Le Ménagier de Paris, D. i. A. vi.

had perpetuated an hierarchy of attentions which formed the bond and the harmony of the social state; when consideration, a thing so little known at the present day, belonged to all ranks, and was manifested in different degrees, by the homage rendered to persons and to positions. This calmed and regulated society, which advanced in peace and confidence, without fears for the future, satisfied with the present, because it was sustained by the moral and religious thought, which was comprehended and accepted under all diversities of the human condition." Thus does a consideration of the utility resulting from politeness lead an illustrious author to recall the times when "faith, that great bond of society, was at the bottom of all minds, when it exercised a powerful influence on manners; when, in a word, it was the 'credo' which regulated life, and determined thoughts\*."

But we must pass on. In general to deny the utility of the supernatural element is to deny the benefit of civilization; since the latter, after all, arose out of it, and had no other origin. For all that distinguishes them from barbarians, the nations of Europe are indebted to the high spiritual, or ascetic principles, constituting the morality which influenced the world when it was told to every one, to the king and to the peasant, to the labouring youth, and to the hoary-headed senator, to the learned and to the ignorant, that, as St. Ephrem says, "the glory of Christians is gentleness and rest; the glory of Christians is to submit and show respect; the glory of Christians is to submit

-I have sinned against you, forgive me †."

It was the supernatural chain of ideas which constituted the family, formed states, substituted peace for war, justice and mercy for the reign of force; and wherever it was renounced, social and political calamities were seen to follow. Adrian concludes a letter written from Saragossa to the emperor Charles V. with these words, "Sire! the cause of all our misfortunes, and of our adversity in general, is, as St. Chrysostom observes, 'that we pervert the Divine rules by setting our affections on what we think convenient for us, rather than on that promise, which adds all temporal good to those who first seek the things eternal. For this maledicti sumus." In fact, a little reflection will convince any one, that the chief cause of all the misery on earth is the adoption of certain false rules and customs, and that there are other rules and customs opposed to these, by means of which men would infallibly avoid the greatest part of it. The Catholic morality involves the latter. behold the type unfolded in every expression of the Church,

† St. Ephr. de Amore Pauperum.

<sup>\*</sup> Le Duc de Noaille, Hist. de Mdme de Maintenon.

when she signifies what she desires for the amelioration of men. Observe, for instance, what she prays may be granted to those who are raised by her to any place of eminence; and for this object open the Roman Pontifical, where you find her desires expressed as follows, "May he receive from Thee, O Lord, in good works, perseverance-in adversis constantiam, in tribulationibus tolerantiam,—in impietatibus misericordiam,—in varietatibus moderationem \*. Endow him with fortitude, prudence, charity, sobriety, patience, long-suffering, insuperable constancy, faith not feigned, imperturbable hope, a devout mind, perfect humility . . . . and in all good acts, inviolable constancy. Take from him, O Lord Jesu Christ—quidquid pravum et distortum est-pride, boasting, vain-glory, and whatever is contrary to salvation †." Observe, again, what is invoked for others collectively, "sit in eis, Domine, per donum spiritus tui prudens modestia, sapiens benignitas, gravis lenitas, casta libertas. Laudabiliter vivant, laudarique non appetant. Tu eis sis honor, tu gaudium, tu voluntas; tu in mœrore solatium; tu in ambiguitate consilium ! !"

Than the fulfilment of such prayers and benedictions, what moral achievement can be more useful to the human race? How important is it to multiply such persons as are seen to exemplify them in their character! to have men essentially humane, gentle, and engaging, while all the time, with more or less of consciousness Divine and heroical in their motives, firm in their actions, determined in their resolution, like that Aredius of Avignon, as described by St. Gregory of Tours, of whom he says, with the simplicity of that spirit of truth which animated him, "erat jucundus in fabulis, strenuus in consiliis, justus in

judiciis et in commisso fidelis §!"

Ought we not to suppose that such characters would resemble, with regard to the estimation in which the world itself holds them, those noble sons of the forest, the larch, of which we are told that "there is no one writer on trees who does not praise them." "A man should not call himself a gentleman," says Antonio de Guevara, writing to Don Antonio de Cunigne, "merely from being of a titled race, from having great riches and many subjects; for all these things a merchant can have, and a Jew procure; but what makes a gentleman, is to be modest in speaking, liberal in giving, temperate in regard to food, moral in living, piteous to forgive, and valiant to combat." There is not one of these qualities essential to a life of utility and honour, which the heroic or supernatural element does not enjoin, and, when the proper occasion arrives, inspire. It constitutes the essence of that virtue which,

<sup>\*</sup> De Benedict. Abb.

<sup>‡</sup> De Benedictione Virginum.

<sup>\*</sup> Td.

<sup>§</sup> Hist. lib. ii.

to use the language of old chivalrous romance, "knows how to make the best of every thing; which can convert the cypress into the laurel, and with a branch of oak make a crown of ever-

lasting flowers."

But it remains to observe the utility resulting from the supernatural morality of Catholicism in regard to the political order, and the social advantages which it confers upon nations. "What an immense subject," exclaims the Count de Maistre, "do political considerations constitute in their relation with higher considerations! All is connected; all is entangled, hooked on together. Even when the aggregate cannot be followed by our weak vision, it is still a consolation to know that it exists, and to render homage to it in the solemn mist in which it is hidden." Later still, an eloquent voice from a separated camp has been heard, bearing witness to the truth which Catholicism has always taught, and saying, "whenever men depart from supernatural views in regard to government and political science, they descend towards ruin."

At the first step, it is evident that what makes men great and good in private life, must impart a public benefit, and provide fitting instruments to promote the general welfare. "There would be no tyrants," said Renaud de Montauban, in the old romance, "if there were no flatterers at Courts," The same truth is expressed by the Count de Maistre, saving, "the most depraved authority can never commit a crime without employing a vice;" which shows what would become of governmental evil, if the virtue of subjects were secure. After all, Catholicism, or the principle included in it, is required in the very foundation of the whole social edifice; for the supernatural morals are concerned with securing virtues, which are essential to the constitution and preservation of families, as of the whole State, the simple idea of duty as opposed to interest being involved in them. The general opinion expressed by Cervantes that "a father's curses are to be dreaded, let the father be what he will," was nothing else but a certain traditionary and popular inference from the supernatural lessons as to the duty of respecting parents, with the observance of which every social obligation is inseparably associated. But let us leave general views, and attend to particular and exact observations.

The supernatural element, then, in the first place, is beneficial to the theory and type of government, as also to the theory and type of subjects; and, secondly, it is useful as forming and directing practically, the men themselves who are engaged in realizing both. "Omnia profecto, cum se à cœlestibus rebus referet ad humanas," says Cicero, "excelsius magnificentiusque et dicet et sentiet." Catholicism, verifying this admirable remark of the philosopher, throws new light upon all political

questions and displays its wisdom in details. "That man may be perfectly governed by civil society alone, is a proposition," says an eminent jurisconsult, "which cannot be maintained. Experience shows that another order of government is also requisite, which regards man in his relation to a more extended and durable existence than human life, and a higher power than the civil magistrate \*."

Suarez lays it down that all human laws are originally derived in some way or other from Divine law, and he cites St. Augustin, saying, "conditor legum temporalium, si vir bonus est et sapiens, legem æternam consulit, ut secundum ejus immutabiles regulas, quid sit pro tempore jubendum vetandumque

discernat.

In fact, the obligatory force of civil or municipal law springs from the Divine will. The Catholic civilization was partly created by the realization of these views, and so well did the civil power co-operate, that the Church actually adopted as her own parts of its legislation; for there are some civil laws extracted from the capitularies of the ancient French kings, which have been placed in the Corpus Juris Canonici, as

belonging to canon law by adoption.

We must not return to a road already explored at length, where we observed the influence of Catholicity upon rulers and the ruled, all which considerations supposed the action of the supernatural principles that are here especially presented to us. For, in fact, Catholicism wholly separated from these, is but a name and a phantom of the imagination, about which no one in quest of the centre is at all concerned. When Lothaire, at last sensible of the folly of his ambition, resigned his dominion, and retired into the abbey of Prum, he said to his children, "all policy which is not in accordance with the counsels of religion is false, pernicious, and sure to lead the princes who practise it from abvss to abyss." It was exactly on that very day seven hundred years after this august and affecting ceremony, that Charles V. abdicated with the same sentiments. Experience had taught both princes the utility of the supernatural principles of Catholicity, without which the world would have never beheld that European monarchy, which has always appeared to wise men, as to the Count de Maistre, "the highest point of perfection, in regard to government, to which our poor nature can attain +;" though sophists have persuaded nations that formerly enjoyed it to stretch out their hands to one people, as if in regard to freedom unlike every other upon earth, and beg

+ Lettres, &c. 148.

<sup>\*</sup> Bower, Readings before the Middle Temple.

for a written constitution from them, as poor mendicants who

ask for soup when they have no bread at home \*.

Frederick II. of Prussia used to say, "if I wished to ruin a country, I would cause it to be governed by philosophers." He meant the French sophists, whose last exploit has made July to yield them an anniversary. What is to be thought of a nation that rejects a restoration of the throne of St. Louis? "If it abuses this last grace," said the Vicomte de Bonald, in one of those moments of discouragement, when he might be excused for joining in the lugubrious predictions of the prophets of evil, forgetting the destiny assured probably to a people still professing the true religion, which it extends by martyrdom, "there is reason to fear that it will perish and fall into an irre-

mediable, hardened impenitence."

But what is the type of government according to supernatural principles? It is the state which upholds the personal freedom of subjects, and the force of that authority which is necessary for the peace of the whole commonwealth. "Sweetness and force should mark all rule," says Dom Claude Martin, exposing the theory of his monastic government, which in that respect differed not from the type of the Catholic secular government of States. "Sweetness," he added, "is a quality which appears in words, looks, gestures, and in the whole air and conduct: such gentleness in action involved all that a mild government demands. In a superior, it is what beauty is in a sensible object. Force is a firmness in regard to the prohibition of things which are against God or reason +." The supernatural principle applied to government, would direct men to take an example from the administrators of forests, in reducing the burdens of the people, not requiring from them even what the poet, conversant with Plantagenet and Tudor kings, seems to sanction, in the words,-

> "Why we take From every tree, top, bark, and part o' the timber, And, though we leave it with a root, thus hack'd The air will drink the sap."

In the Capitular instructions at Monte Cassino in 1273, among the sins which God is said to detest, are reckoned, "exactiones," and "telonaria injusta‡." The supernatural morality would, as in the old Christian monarchies of France and Spain, regulate the expenditure, diminish the wants, and mode-

<sup>\*</sup> Lett. i. 86. + Chavin. de Malan, Hist. de D. Mabillon. ‡ Hist. Cassinens. viii. 467.

rate the pecuniary demands of government. It would cause its voice to be heard in favour of the commonalty; "it would," as Cervantes says, "protect the peasants and the gentry, reward ingenious artists," and encourage all rational progress in things that are progressive. Certainly, it is no error to maintain that it would supply the two great principles which a celebrated modern politician deems essential to the welfare of nations. It would be the guardian of liberty, and at the same time of order; it would supply the moving power, and the steadying power of the State. It would furnish the sail without which society would make no progress, and the ballast without which there would be small safety in a tempest. "I have ever loved," it might say, with Massinger—

"An equal freedom, and proclaim'd all such As would usurp another's liberties Rebels to nature, to whose bounteous blessings All men lay claim as true legitimate sons."

Further, it would never cease from giving those pacific counsels which we know, from history, have not been withheld from Catholic governments. "As for me," says one who sought to introduce it at the Court of Louis XIV., "I only breathe peace. I would never give the king any advice injurious to his glory; but if I were trusted, men would have less ambition, men would esteem a victory less, and they would think more seriously about salvation. I pray God to inspire the king with a love of peace. I love him as I love my brother; and I should wish to see them both perfect, in order that they might be sure of the judgment of God being favourable to themselves \*." Orators and statesmen, uninfluenced by the supernatural element, hold language often, in Parliament, which might remind one of Antony, demanding, "utrum sit elegantius," to pursue the death of Trebonius or of Cæsar, which draws from Cicero the burst of indignant eloquence, exclaiming, "utrum elegantius! atque hoc bello de elegantia quæritur †." So these men demand, "does not the dignity of the Crown (they say this after reducing it to an abstraction) require such new penal laws? will it not be more English, more gentlemanlike, -in short, elegantius, to cease opposing those who, in the name of the government, desire to perpetrate some great injustice?" But it falls in perfectly with the supernatural character to make distinctions in favour of what is naturally virtuous and amiable, to remark that, "the law itself distinguishes between favourable matters and odious matters, the

<sup>\*</sup> Lett. de Mde de Maint. à Mde de Saint-Géran. + Phil. xiii.

latter being penal laws, things that alter what is already established, things that are more onerous to one than to another, and that would render an instrument null and without effect. It is useful, in making and constructing statutes, to have a general philosophy like the Catholic, which will be quick to mark these distinctions, and slow to follow the invitations of men overlooking them, or to heed their insinuations, that it would be more elegant to treat odious as favourable matters, as if law itself did not admit that in the former every opposition by a figurative sense may be admitted, for the purpose of getting rid of the onerous consequences of the strict legal meaning. The supernatural morals will best agree with the maxim of the civil law, "that in things favourable it is better to pass beyond the intentions of the legislator than not to reach it; while, in things odious, it is better not to reach it than to pass beyond it;" and, in general, they will prepare men for carrying out another legal maxim, that "summa est ratio quæ pro religione facit."

No circumstances can occur in the political order under which the judgment of nations and of rulers might not reap a real and practical utility from referring to the supernatural test. How lately has not a great people been mistaken in thinking themselves affronted which made them act as if not only their whole country had been challenged conjointly, but as if their imagined foe, like Don Diego Ordonnez de Lara, had gone so far as to challenge the dead, the waters, the bread, or the unborn! Had their choler been under the influence of an ascetic bridle, they would have found, as the knight of Cervantes told the braying populace which thought itself insulted, that no person had affronted either the kingdom or a single town of it-that there was no occasion to revenge what was really no affront—that to talk of revenge in such a quarrel, besides that it would lead them to act against common sense, was, at all events, acting directly against the religion they professed, which required them to love those that hate them, a precept only difficult to those who have less of God than of the world, and more of the flesh than of the Spirit,-that in the instance which caused all this commotion, when their opponent had only acted as if he thought they would comply with the invitation so famous on the French stage-" Honorez-moi, monsiéur, de votre indifférence," according even to the established laws that respect outrage, they could not have been injured; since he who cannot receive an affront, can much less give one; for which reason there was nothing to inflame them with anger; and that they were bound to be quiet and pacified by all laws both Divine and human. There have been times, as now, when eclecticks in religion sought to perse-

cute Catholicism, and urged the will of the majority as constituting a motive for the government to act against it. How useful, then, the supernatural element which so deeply comprehends the lesson conveyed to Parliament by Burke, with such indignant eloquence, when he said, "When we know that the opinions of even the greatest multitudes are the standard of rectitude, I shall think myself obliged to make these opinions the masters of my conscience. I would cheerfully gratify the humour of the people; but I never will act the tyrant for their amusement. If they will mix malice in their sports, I shall never consent to throw them any living, sentient creature whatsoever, no, not so much as a kitling to torment." Where naturalism reigns, truth, if involving any spiritual interest, has no chance of obtaining even a patient hearing, and the result will resemble that issue which Cicero so deplored when he complained that so great a man as Rutilius was lost to the state in consequence of his cause having been pleaded as though it were

being tried in the republic of Plato\*.

On the other hand, the supernatural principle would produce a most beneficial effect in facilitating the task of rulers, by preserving the Christian, in opposition to the strictly Protestant and rationalist, theory respecting the duty of subjects. Genuine Protestantism introduced, as we observed on a former road, a complication of disturbing forces. Rationalism gave them further extension, "till, after having made the tour of society," as Chateaubriand observes, "and passed through diverse civilizations and supposed unknown developments, men find themselves at the point from which they set out, in presence of the truths of Scripture," that is, of the supernatural view of society, established by Catholicism. You sought equality, you find, by experience, what even the Roman could detect, that it is dissimilitude of views, not of social position, which disturbs States .-"Non potestatum dissimilitudo," says Cicero, "sed animorum disjunctio dissensionem facit†." You promised to enrich all; but where have you found, or where can you find the riches for each man requiring material delights? "L'ame est économe; mais le corps est dépensier." Catholicism, as a popular element, economized resources for the advantage of the poor, and rendered a nation content. As Cervantes recommended, when a man in high position could keep six pages, he clothed but three, and then clothed three of the poor, in order to have pages for heaven and for earth too, a way of giving liveries which naturalism never thought of. On the other hand, the lower orders were satisfied with walking upon plain ground with a plain foot, knowing that if it be not adorned with pinked Cordovan shoes,

<sup>\*</sup> De Orat, i, 53.

it will not want for hempen sandals. Catholicism produces the race described by the poet, each, a true labourer; able to say of himself.

"I earn that I eat, get that I wear;
Owe no man hate, envy no man's happiness;
Glad of other men's good, content with my harm."

How useful to the state is a contented population, contented without artificial and political excitement, contented even in poverty, which does not exclude the natural pleasures intended for human life from the beginning;—when the labouring youth, for reasons best known to himself, is as gay as the son of a prince, and when the mendicant can say, with the poet—

"To lie in kilns and barns at e'en When bones are crazed and bluid is thin, Is doubtless great distress; Yet then content could make us blest; Ev'n then sometimes we'd snatch a taste Of truest happiness. What though, like commoners of air, We wander out, we know not where, But neither house nor hall: Yet nature's charms, the hills and woods, The sweeping vales and foaming floods Are free alike to all. In days when daisies deck the ground, And blackbirds whistle clear, With honest joy our hearts will bound To see the coming year."

It is Catholicism, it is its supernatural morality more than all that poets ever contemplated, which realizes such happiness; for, as Dante says, "it is charity which makes us will alone what we possess, and nought beyond desire \*." St. Leo says, "Semper dives est Christiana paupertas, quia plus est quod habet quam quod non habet; nec pavet in isto mundo indigentia laborare, cui donatum est in omnium rerum Domino omnia possidere †." The pulpit, the confessional, the practice of communion, the rational combination of piety with things required by the natural order, and the manners which result from all, have realized, during nineteen centuries, the phenomenon which the great pontiff thus describes. Naturalism, requiring in all ranks what is expensive, extravagant, and impossible, produces insatiable demands. Nourishing jealousy and pride, it imparts to all classes a thirst for pre-eminence. Tailors, mercers, scriveners, as when such men followed Perkin Warbeck, say to each other-

<sup>\*</sup> Par. 3.

<sup>+</sup> S. Leo, Serm. iv. de Quadrag.

"You are all read in mysteries of state, And quick of apprehension, deep in judgment, Active in resolution; and 'tis pity Such counsel should lie buried in obscuritye."

No one, probably, in some countries, will now ask what social and political harm can arise from such natural ambition? "It is a positive fact," says a great author, "that duty alone gives a durable existence to human society. Interest, on the contrary, is a fiction, when taken, as at the present day, in its physical and rigorous sense; since it is not in the evening what it was in the morning; since every instant it changes its nature; since, founded on fortune, it has its mutability. By the moral of interests, every citizen is in a state of hostility with the laws and government; for it is the majority that suffers. He who fulfils his duty is esteemed; he who yields to his interests is thought but little of. It was a curious idea of the age to draw a principle of government from a contemptible source. Interests are only powerful when they prosper. In adversity they grow Duty, on the contrary, is never so energetic as when its fulfilment costs dear. I like a principle of government that grows great in misfortune. What absurdity to tell the people to think only of their interests! It is the same as if you said, "Do not come to help us if your interest tells you not to do so. With this profound policy, when the hour for sacrifice comes, every one will shut his door, and look out from the window, to see pass away the monarchy."

The supernatural element renders society like the forest, in which the great and little live together, rendering each other mutual service; for the hawthorn loves the shade, and grows rapidly under great trees, such as oaks, ash, and elms. The vaccinium myrtillus similarly loves the shade of great trees, and disappears when deprived of them. The broom, on the other hand, is useful to the forest, supplying shade and shelter to young plants, and then, as they grow up, yielding them the

place \*.

The supernatural principle is useful thus, in reconciling the interests of high and low; and it is not, one may suppose, in this age at least, when are seen the strange consequences of considering separately one section of a people, giving to that section the name of the people, and reducing to law whatever may be its will, without regard to the whole, that men of judgment can overlook the advantage which arises to all classes from inculcating and securing submission to degree, loyalty, and respect. In the old Breton poem of Al Zean, we have an instance of the kind of instruction it supplies;

<sup>\*</sup> Burgsdorf, Manual Forestier.

for when Lez Breiz knocked, at midnight, at the door of the hermit, dwelling in the wood of Helleau, which formed part of the immense forest of Brécilien, and began to curse all traitors, and the king, and the French, the hermit said to him, "My son, beware of ever cursing friend or foe, and, above all, the lord king, who is God's anointed." If he had knocked at the door of the sophist, or even of the professed Catholic, who adopted half his views, it would have been a different kind of lesson that he would have received. No one is ignorant of the fatal principles with which the innovators of France and Germany have filled their books of political theories, while the Catholic Church continues, age after age, to teach the same great essential truths of the social organization, namely, that God has created man for society, which is proved by facts, that a social state makes government indispensable; and that every one owes obedience, fidelity, and devotion to that under which he lives. Catholicity has ever on its tongue such prayers for the secular ruler as Lawrence Minot, in the reign of Edward III., expresses, in the lines-

> "Now Mary Moder, of mercy free, Save our king and his Meny Fro sorrow, shame, and sin."

Where will kings or presidents find an equivalent for such prayers, offered from the hearts of the population which they govern? "In the sixteenth century," says the Count de Maistre, "princes established the new religions, in order to rob the Church; in the nineteenth, they will re-establish the Church, if it be not too late, in order to preserve their thrones from being tossed into the air by the principles of the reform." But, supposing thrones less important than they are, let us observe the practical utility of the supernatural morals, as resulting positively, in the light of day, from the character of the men who practise them in reference to subjects and to rulers.

It is needless to ask whether the supernatural principles would prove useful in forming kings, ministers, and public men; for that would be to question the utility of rulers employing their knowledge and power in studying to be more upright and honourable, more wise, more patient, and more compassionate than they are. If they had but learned to adopt the supernatural morals inculcated by such guides as Bossuet and Fénélon, how many wars and social catastrophes would have been obviated, how many sources of bitter strife and of national weakness dissipated, and how many interests not less temporal for involving the salvation of subjects, protected and fostered! But other views too often sway the cabinets of kings and ministers. We hear it said—

"Affection is my captain, and he leads;
And when his gaudy banner is display'd,
The coward fights, and will not be dismay'd."

"Nemo securè apparet, nisi, qui libenter latet— Nemo securè loquitur nisi qui libenter tacet \*."

The cloistral maxims comprise often thus a profound political and social truth; and these are instances. Cassiodorus said to the Benedictine monks, "Sum quidem judex Palatinus, sed vester non desinam esse discipulus; nam tunc ista recte gerimus, si a vestris regulis minime discedamus." Leibnitz notices a curious instance in which appears the utility that secular government and legislators, too often inflenced by the prejudices of a particular age, can derive from consulting an ascetic guide. "The memory of this excellent man, Father Spee, Jesuit, ought," he says, "to be precious to persons of good sense; for he is the author of the book entitled, 'Cautio criminalis circa Processus contra Sagas,' which has been widely spread, and translated into many languages. I heard from the Grand Elector of Mayence, John Philip of Schönbron. that this father, being in Franconia at a time when there was quite a rage for burning pretended sorcerers, was so touched by the inquiries he made, and the proofs he obtained of their innocence, that, in spite of the danger to which he exposed himself, by telling the truth, he resolved to compose and publish this work, which induced the government to put a stop to these proceedings, in which prohibition it was followed by the Duke of Brunswick, and by other princes and states of Germany +."

In a political point of view, the utility of a government, conducted according to the supernatural morals of Catholicity, would be incontestable if men retained any of the primitive traditions respecting the consequences of a Divine protection; for other nations would fear to offend Heaven by attacking it, as

the Homeric lines imply-

όππότ' ἀνὴρ ἐθέλη πρὸς δαίμονα φωτὶ μάχεσθαι, ὄν κε θεὸς τιμῷ, τάχα οἱ μέγα πῆμα κυλίσθη‡.

Such governments have been accused of weakness, of an exaggerated gentleness. There may have been at times some foundation for such charges; but, as the Count de Maistre says. "Equity requires men to avow that the errors of goodness are more respectable than the errors that are opposite." At all events, in an age like the present, when the supernatural morality has been long in part rejected by governments, it

BOOK VI.

seems to imply no exaggeration of the importance of theories to maintain that a return to it can alone restore to soundness and security the political state of Europe. "The French revolution," says this great observer, "is Satanic; and if the counter-revolution be not Divine, it is null and void \*."

In fine, the utility of the supernatural element, in the formation of the character, in regard to all interests of a political or social nature, may be inferred from observing that those who are under its influence are resolute in the discharge of every public as well as private duty, while regardless of their own personal interest or ambition. Robert de Fiennes, constable of France, during the course of his military command, had received at different times immense sums from the state, for the payment of troops, and for other purposes. When, in his old age, he resigned his high office, the king, Charles V., declared, by letters-patent, of the 24th of May, 1380, that he dispensed him from ever giving in any accounts respecting the employment of the money; and the reasons which the king assigned on granting this favour present a curious example of the confidence which this probity inspires; for, after stating that he bestows it in consideration of his great services, he continues, in these words, "considering also his own affirmation, that he has never kept any of the money which had been entrusted to him or to his agents; that he never had proposed, or wished to acquire, or accumulate money, or lands, or inheritances, but employed all his pains to acquire only good renown and honour, to the praise and profit of us and of our kingdom, considering also that he is not expert at making out accounts-attendu aussi qu'il n'est pas expert au fait, ni en reddicion de tels comptes; and that with persons of this kind, one ought to behave more benignly than with others, in order that the most worthy may feel that they are remunerated with greater favours; for these reasons we dispense him and his heirs from ever rendering any account respecting the sums that have passed through his hands +."

Whatever tends to multiply men to whom such dispensations can be prudently given, is hardly to be deemed, one may suppose, a thing of no importance in regard to States or to the

public

In the epistles of Don Antonio de Guevara, we find another example, which occurs in a letter from the Admiral of Castille, to the Seigneurs of Seville: "Know then, potent lords," he says to them, "that being with the countess, my wife, in Catalonia, retired on my estates, I only asked to live in peace, to employ the short time that remained to me in the service of

<sup>\*</sup> Lett. 81.

<sup>+</sup> Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes, iii. série, tom. iii. p. 50.

God, withdrawing myself from all troubles and commotions, as far as possible. But seeing that the commotions of Castille had reached even to the place where we were residing, the love of this kingdom had more power to make me move, than the desire of rest, which I sought in Catalonia to keep me inactive. I accepted, therefore, the mission entrusted to me by the king our sire, and in determining to serve him, my principal intention is, to refer all things to God. And hence I have hope in God, that this labour will turn to the salvation of my soul, and to the benefit of the republic." Again, in reply to the lords of the union, he says, "if I had embraced this affair as my own private affair, I should have replied to the wrongs I have suffered; but as I am devoted wholly to the service of the kingdom, and to the interest of the kingdom, no personal injury shall ever make me think of myself; and if all did so, we should now be inhabiting our respective manors, and not beating the country." But "there is no confusion greater than when we cannot find means of giving repose to the soul. No other considerations could have induced me to act thus, but sorrow at the injury which the kingdom was enduring; I have not had regard to wealth or to increase of estates; for during the short time I have to live, I have more occasion to seek means for preserving, than for exposing my life; but as I am near the end of my old days, I believe that God will take pleasure in my dying with so good a resolution, and in such a holy cause, since I have no end in view but to serve his majesty. This is the reason why I endure patiently the wrongs and outrages which have been committed against me; for, as I have no other object in view than the public good of the kingdom, I have put far from me all regard to greatness, ruling myself only by reason and patience; and I think that I have written more than a thousand pages concerning this matter, as one can see by the duplicates of the letters which I have in my coffers. Certes, the cities of this kingdom may well be assured that nothing induces me to seek their profit but my conviction that this is the affair of God, and my anxiety to secure the salvation of my soul, giving order and remedy to the perplexities of the kingdom. And sooth, if the king wished to purchase my pains with money, he could not do it, although he is the greatest lord of the world: for remembering that we have a God, and that there is such a thing as death, and that our life is short, I would never put up my labour to sale, for I reserve it to repair what is past; and therefore you may well believe, since I have no children, but am solitary with my wife, that the love of Castille alone has induced me to give up my repose; for I was already set out when I received the king's commission; and though the sweetness of rest, and the affection which one must bear to one's estates, moved my flesh, nevertheless, the love of

Castille pressed so upon my spirit, that I could have no rest until I had undertaken this troublesome charge; and, therefore, without having regard to the solemn festivals which God commands us to observe, or to the repose which my age required, or to the great inundations that were abroad, I set forth on my

journey.

"In the conduct of this affair, I have shown myself pacific. On arriving at Torre, I announced to you my intention of approaching the gates of the city with my hunters, for these are the only armed men that I have brought with me from my house to assist me in pacifying this kingdom; and when I came to speak to you, gentlemen, you could easily discern that I had no other object but the honour of Castille, and that this was the sole cause of my leaving a country that I had found equally proper for eternal life, and for this transitory life; and then I showed how these affairs regarded peasants and artisans, and orphans and widows; that one ought to seek the good road, which is the easiest, and not take to the rocks and defiles to accomplish our ends-that you ought to disband your troops, and send away every man to his own house, without eating any longer the bread of the poor, and turning upside down the whole republic; for the fact is, that good men can easily do without wars, which are useful chiefly for ruining the people with taxes and impositions, and nothing should ever enter into the heart of a knight which can cause him blame and reproach. Finally I declared to your lordships that the king wished to bring these troubles to an end not by force but by love, and that in labouring to effect the public good I wished that you and the whole kingdom should make no more account of me personally than of a shoemaker. If it had been a private affair between us, I should have acted, you may be sure, as a knight, for neither I, nor any of my predecessors, have ever ceased, through fear, from doing what their duty required them; but remembering that this is the cause of the kingdom, which has more need of peace than of troubles, I have borne all with patience, and I shall be content to endure still more if I think that I can thereby draw the good which I desire. Finally," he concludes, "I demand that note be taken of all these proceedings, to serve me for testi-mony; calling upon blessed St. Francis and St. Jerome, my good patrons, to bear me witness before God, that I have summoned you in His name to lay down your arms, and to labour for the public good. I-declare that God will call you to account for all the Christians that will be lost, and for all the crimes and injuries which this disunion will cause if you refuse peace. I also summon the cities, by God and by their salvation, to chase away all such counsellors as oppose it, and to assemble, in their place, peasants, artisans, priests, and knights, who are gentle and

not passionate, in order that with them we may devote ourselves to the public good by the means divinely ordained, without suffering private interests to seduce us to the side of the enemy. May God conduct these affairs, as we desire to accomplish whatever He knows is best for His own service, and for the benefit of us all."

From observing such results, one cannot wonder that in former times, when opinions were not substituted for faith, the State itself, as being a government of Christians, and of men who wished to continue such, should have cast its shield before the supernatural banner, and proclaimed its resolution to uphold the cause that it represented, pronouncing infamous and ineligible to all offices, whoever should obstinately and practically oppose it, as the canonist declared, saying, "infamous persons we call those who despise ecclesiastical statutes, all violators of sepulchres, rebels to their parents, and those who unjustly take away the property of the Church; also, those who accuse their brethren, and prove not their charge \*."

But we may not remain here longer, pursuing considerations of this kind respecting the utility to be drawn from the supernatural morality, lest we should be thought to be only yielding fresh proof to justify some minister of State in Parliament, for accusing Catholicism and the Holy See of a conspiracy

against the liberties of Europe.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE ROAD OF THE SAVAGE MAN.



orests have their histories, which in some respects present certain results corresponding with those that seem to be obtained by the history of nations. Thus we learn from the history of forests, that the ground will not suffer itself to be long planted without interruption with one and the same kind of trees.

Where gigantic oaks once grew, pines alone are now found to flourish: and in other countries, where resinous timber only

Burchardi Decret, lib. i. c. 173.

existed, the broad-leaved sons of the wood are now exclusive possessors. According to a tradition, the forest of Thuringia suffers a transformation by periods of three or four centuries; and after experiments made in France, it has been concluded, that the transformation of kinds of trees in forests, takes place

by much shorter periods \*.

The vicissitudes in the moral forest may not be frequent, regular, or inevitable; but it is difficult not to perceive evidence that they do exist, and that there is always a possibility of their recurrence. In the forests of America, if any part formed of one particular class of trees should perish, it is said to be certain that they will not be succeeded by others of the same class, but by a species totally different, of which the seeds may have long lain dormant in the earth. We find that a similar phenomenon occurs in the moral world; for, where the principles of Catholicity are extirpated, it is not a generation characterized by supernatural virtue that succeeds. The dormant seeds of evil that have long lain there-seeds of paganism, of barbarism; seeds of that corrupt nature, which constitutes the 'vetus homo' of St. Paul, will suddenly shoot forth with a simultaneous germination. The forest contains other analogies, of which an observation may supply a fitting prelude to what we have next to consider; for the disposition and habits of trees differ greatly. Some kinds live more by their trunks, others more by their leaves; the one vegetate more by the food which they draw from the earth; the others derive more substance from the aerial nourishment. Some are slow in growth; the progress of others is prodigiously accelerated. Burgsdorf, Varenne-Fénille, Delamarre, and other forest writers, have devoted themselves to study and compare the strength of various kinds of timber, the elasticity, weight, strength, liability to warp or shrink, and durability, which distinguish the wood of each kind of tree, while Buffon, Réaumur, Duhamel, Haller, Bonnet, Tschoudi, and Miller, have studied the leaves, and every thing relative to the physical history of the woods; and now, though it be a digression, let us observe a circumstance relative to one of these foresters. Trees are said to weep. Theophrastus speaks expressly of their tears. Here is an incident that might explain them. Varenne-Fénille published his work on forests at a sinister epoch—in 1792. He raised his voice against the pillage and devastation of forests, against what were called the natural views of the rights of man being applied to the forest, and it was this devotion which contributed to the death of one of the most celebrated and regretted victims of the revolution. He was

<sup>\*</sup> Cotta, Principes de la Science Forestière, 12.

guillotined, and partly on account of this devotion to the interest of the forests, so that they too may be said to have had their martyrs, who died for the trees, that wrong no one.

· But proceeding to a subject which, by analogy, may be connected with such retrospects, we may observe, that in the forest of life there is need of students, who will transfer to men the care which these administrators of woods have bestowed on trees, appreciating and comparing the relative strength, weight, pliability, and durability, of the different classes or characters,

that are found in the world.

Such has been the study of those who have hitherto accompanied us; but it still remains to distinguish a very extended and numerous family of minds, consisting of those who consciously and systematically resist the action of the supernatural element of Catholicism, and who, both without and within the Church, pretend to substitute for it a code, or rather habit of morals, merely, as they suppose, natural, and exclusive of all views resulting from that primitive revelation and tradition with which Catholicism is found so strictly to agree. A consideration of this antagonistic class, will be found to form another avenue through which the central truth can be discovered; since it will show that the general results of rejecting what the Catholic religion requires and supplies, are evil even in the common estimation of mankind. We have seen the character of the supernatural element. We have found the Catholic morality to be in harmony with nature, as originally and traditionally constituted, and, in fine, to be, in a multifarious manner, practically useful. We shall find now, on proceeding to examine the system formally opposed to it, that there is no advantage, but every possible injury to be expected, from making the substitution which the world marshalled under every banner, in all ages, with more or less violence, insists upon.

How trees degenerate, and fruits degenerate, is known to every one familiar with the woods. Fig-trees and vines have been known to produce black, after bearing white fruit, which instances are cited by Theophrastus as miracles of nature \*. In the moral world, the same phenomena occur. Men degenerate; men professing the Catholic religion degenerate, becoming worse than the wildest races; and where virtues once grew vices in every form succeed. The contrast is of all ages. Cain and Abel represent the two systems of morality that prevail in the world. They had their disciples in the college of the Apostles, when Judas, choosing natural views of what was good

<sup>\*</sup> De Hist. Plant. ii. 4.

and beneficial, fell. With the spreading Church, both classes were multiplied, as the epistles of the New Testament attest. At the period of the fall of the Roman empire, the priest Salvian justified the providence of God, by appealing to the extension of that class which rejected the supernatural morality of the Church. "Let us see," he says, "what right we have to expect that God would distinguish our cause from that of the barbarians. Is it that we keep the law of God? Do we love our enemies? do good to them who hate us, and pray for our persecutors? Who does this in mind? 'He who hateth his brother,' says the Apostle, 'is a murderer,' and are we, then, free from blood? Do we carry our cross daily? otherwise than as having more dignity in the name of the cross, than of suffering in carrying it? Do we imitate Christ as the Apostle imitated Him? giving offence to no one? Truly we imitate Him only in regard to his thrice having suffered shipwreck! There we surpass him; for not thrice only are we wrecked, but our whole life is one shipwreck, in as much as every day we live viciously. Christ forbids us to litigate. Who obeys? Where are they who yield to their adversaries, and who do not endeavour to spoil them in turn, so far from giving their cloak. 'Let all clamour,' says the Apostle, 'be taken away, with all malice.' We persevere in both, yet rather in malice than in clamour. When, again, do we cease from murmuring? If the weather be hot, we complain; if cold and wet, we complain. If, then, in all things we offend, why do we expect that God will hear us, and consider us as his people \*. But," he continues, "some one will say, 'we are, at least, better than the barbarians.' Are we indeed better than they? Certes, we ought to be better, and therefore, if not better, we must be much worse. Nothing more disgraceful than a vicious life in a professor of wisdom; and we, therefore, who profess the Christian philosophy, should be counted worse than all others, if we sin against religion under such a name. Now, the barbarians consist of two classes, heretics and pagans; and I lament to say, that in regard to life and manners, we are far worse than these +. Almost all the barbarians of the same race and kind love each other. Almost all the Romans persecute each other. What citizen does not envy his neighbour? Who shows true charity !!

"There are even some few monks, the only class generally free from all these vices, who, under the cloak of religion, lead the worst life of seculars; who, so far from seeming to do penance now for past crimes, appear only to repent, having formerly

<sup>\*</sup> De Gubernatione Dei, lib. iii. + Id. lib. iv. 12, 13. ± Lib. v. 9.

repented, and having promised to live virtuously. These are the men who are not content with what would satisfy seculars, but they must be greater than they were when in the world, so false is their conversion \*.

"Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps. The steps of the Saviour we follow in the circus, in the theatres. It is not sufficient to us that we should laugh, unless we should laugh sinfully and insanely, unless our laughter be mixed with wickedness; I desire that we should laugh, that we should rejoice, provided it be with innocence +, but in our theatres there is a certain apostasy, and a deadly prevarication, opposed to our symbol and the celestial sacraments. If we recur to such spectacles, we return from our baptismal state to the devil, whom we have renounced. If it seem a light thing to any one, let him reflect, and he will be convinced that in our theatres there is not pleasure, but death. But so it is, and we prefer comedies to the Churches; we despise altars, and honour theatres-'altaria spernimus et theatra honoramus.' Facts attest this; for if it happens, that on the same day there should be an ecclesiastical festival and public games, I ask the consciences of all, to which does the majority of Christians repair? Are the words of life prized like the words of death? There is no doubt but that men follow the actor, and desert Jesus Christ. 'Spernitur Dei templum ut curratur ad theatrum.' But perhaps it will be answered, that this is not the case in all cities of the Romans. True; it is not so in Mayence, but the reason is, that the city has been overthrown. is not so in Cologne, because it is in the hands of the enemy. It is not so in Trèves, because it has been destroyed four times; but the evils have only ceased with the power of the Romans, and when the barbarians came into possession ‡." "Rightly are we vanquished; for when we came proudly, trusting in arms, the Vandals sought to oppose to us the words of the sacred volume. Who amongst us, I demand, has ever done the like? Or who would not be laughed at if he thought it ought to be done? Truly, he would be derided by us, as all things religious are. Therefore, what avail to us the prerogative of a name? calling ourselves Catholics, and despising the Goths and Vandals, as involved in the disgrace of heresy, when we live in the exercise of heretical depravity ◊.

"The Arian error is involuntary; whereas, we neglect what we believe, and sin with knowledge, doing what we know to be perverse. Consequently, by a just judgment, God bears with

<sup>\*</sup> v. 10. † vi. 5. ‡ Lib. vi. 7, 8. § vii. xi.

them, and punishes us; both for one end, that punishment may restrain Catholics from sinning, and that patience may permit the heretics to come to a full knowledge of the truth, who, if they had faith, he foresees would lead better lives than we have done \*."

The extension of what are supposed to be natural and human principles, as opposed to the supernatural morals of Catholicity, can be traced of course through all ages down to the present day. It is a consideration of this fact which seems to have imparted to the mind of Pope Innocent III. that tone of melancholy, which makes his style at times resemble that of Salvian. Let us be content with one extract: "Misery," he says, "is the lot of man; he does the ill he ought to avoid; he devotes himself to futilities without profit, and becomes the food of worms. How many troubles do men engage in for temporal goods! what interior agitations for every thing! The rich and poor, the master and servant, the married and the unmarried, are all tormented in different ways of misery. How many afflictions have the married! how many griefs do husbands suffer from the vanity, ambition, and jealousy of their wives! Great as are the calamities of fortune, the moral misery is no less great. Three passions, above all, devour the heart of man,—the thirst for riches, sensuality, and ambition. Nothing more shameful than avarice: then one never regards the thing but the person; and justice is sold for money. The avaricious is insatiable, and constantly tormented by fears: he is without pity, the enemy of God, of his neighbour, and of himself, always ready to ask and never to give. He esteems much what he gives, and very little what he receives: he gives to receive, but he does not receive to give. These men are in complete opposition to the order established by nature. Man has need of water and bread, of shelter and clothing; but vice has transformed these necessities, and nothing can suffice to his luxury. Then gluttony and drunkenness prepare the way for all vices which follow in their train. All thoughts, and actions, and cleverness, are directed to the end of acquiring the glory and favour of men. To attain honours, one has only words of flattery, one prays, one promises; one seeks and purchases, by indirect ways, the position which one could not obtain by those that are direct; or else one seizes it by force, reckoning on the help of friends or the interest of relations. But what a burden are these same dignities! Scarcely has the ambitious man reached the summit of his desires, when his pride knows no bounds; his arrogance has no bridle; he believes himself the better as his position is more elevated; he disdains his friends, recognizes no longer those of the day preceding, scorns his oldest ties; he looks aside, walks fiercely, with head lifted up, full of pride, dropping insolent words, meditating great things. He is the enemy of his superiors, and the tyrant of his inferiors. Pride caused the fall of the devil, the degradation of Nabuchodonosor: it offends God.

Hurter, after citing the passage, adds, "he who contemplates life with such sentiments will direct his intelligence to religion; and rising above what is passing and perishable, will seek only what is permanent and everlasting." Who denies that, to a certain extent, the same melancholy estimate of life might be verified by an appeal to what still passes in the world? The evils from which the light of Christianity delivered mankind have always a tendency to return. The most cultivated nations may decline till they at length contract all the barbarism of a savage state; for savage life is nothing else but degeneracy of manners, arrived after many generations at such an extreme limit as to obliterate all vestiges of original knowledge with the dictates of tradition, and even of reason. Each Christian, in his intelligence and morals, by means of a gradual apostasy, may become a representative of the savage man. By dint of rejecting the Catholic doctrines, one after the other, and of abandoning all the control which faith had once exercised, he at length, in point of fact, grows wild as any monster in the woods; and then, with a certain diabolic cunning, advocating what he calls naturalism, he succeeds in combining the manners of the savage with the varnish of an impious refinement, like the Chinese, who adopts a kind of Voltairean philosophy while practising infanticide and all the other vices of a savage race. "I have more hopes of a Protestant," says the Count de Maistre, "than of a Catholic country which has left truth to rot within it. state of the Catholic world fills me with shame \*." "France. Spain, Naples, Lisbon,—how have they suffered from the works of Choiseul, Pombal, d'Aranda, and others! By the fearful conspiracy of infidels, Christianity has been nearly reduced to nothing throughout Europe, even in Catholic countries. The scandals witnessed at Vienna have caused the present Emperor of Russia, it is said, to contract incurable prejudices against the Catholic religion." We must remark, however, in citing these words, that the event unseen and unpredicted by the Count, proved that Alexander was able to distinguish between Catholicism and the moral consequences of that system of Joseph II., which was invented and organized in its despite.

Lettres, i. 133.

The hostility of some minds, constituting what in theological language is called the world, to the supernatural morals of the Catholic Church, is a great historical fact, which may guide many men to the central truth, through the displeasure caused by a scrutiny of its principles. With every other system we find that this opposition is willing to agree. It will enter into combination by the laws of moral affinity with every thing else: with Paganism and its philosophy; with Mahometanism and its views of human nature; with oriental systems and all their austerities; with Protestantism and all its contradictions; -only with Catholicism, in its true and divine character, it will never assimilate. This fact alone is significative. This first observation can already lead us far upon the way. For to discover but one evil source of this opposition, we may observe, that it is but a consequence of what has been often remarked by philosophers, that a mixture of a lie which must ever attend it, doth ever add pleasure. "How shrunk," says one of them, "is every thing as it appears in the glass of nature! so that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, false valuations, false lights, imaginations as one would and the like, they would be left poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves." It is to guard against this contingency that men, knowing not the power of truth, resolve, let the cost be what it may, to oppose the supernatural views and morals of Catholicism, which they instinctively know would so far verify the sentence, as to make them see themselves as they are, and in their true relation: and so, in language that the poet puts into the mouth of Satan, they enter their protest against all who would introduce-

" Law and edict on them, who without law err not."

But waving the advantage from such general views, let us proceed to investigate, one by one, the leading features of this great antagonism, that we may form a just estimate of the

attention which its claims and pretensions merit.

In the first place, there is a confusion of ideas in those who speak of natural religion and natural morals. What they propose in opposition to the Catholic system may correspond with nature, subject to vice and error; but as a great German author says, nothing is less natural than these religions and morals, if we confine the word to its true signification. The order of nature which they invoke has never existed in reality. All theologians agree, that from the beginning God instructed externally our first parents as to their last end, so that the natural order has never existed separately, or deprived of the

supernatural order. The contrary opinion, as a great theologian remarks, is a mere hypothesis—a system subject to a thousand objections. Naturalism is a state of mind and a mode of life not conformable, but opposed to nature, which always recognizes the want of a higher sphere, co-existing with the animal and civil order, in which it may develop itself. As in philosophy rationalism is unnatural, so in morals naturalism is in contradiction with nature; and this may be inferred from studying the character of those in whom natural impressions can be most easily discerned, as youths, and the lower orders of the community, which, in the normal state of the world, are the last to reject from their thoughts and motives what is externally taught, what is mysterious and Divine. When we proceed to survey this naturalism in detail, we find, in limine, one very unsatisfactory characteristic belonging to it, namely, the absence of great goodness. There is nothing noble, nothing honourable, nothing greatly good in this opposition to make any virtuous man fall in love with it, or resolve to take his part with it, following all its suggestions against that Catholicism which we have beheld through so many avenues inviting us towards its glorious light. To survey the followers of this pale flag, is to witness a scene like that described by Dante, where he says,-

> "Along the dismal path-way, step by step We journey'd on, in silence looking round, And listening those diseas'd who strove in vain To lift their forms\*."

The simple rustic clerk, who preached a funeral sermon on Claude de Lorraine, Duc de Guise, seeming to have been at a loss for epithets, called him repeatedly "trimégiste," adding, "c'est à dire, très excellent chrestien." Accepting this translation from the good man-with whom it would be very unnecessary, at this distance of time, on philological grounds to quarrel-we may observe, that nothing of this kind of excellence which won his admiration, can be detected in the system which here presents itself. If we desired a forest comparison, and, to speak with most moderation, we might say that it was like the birch, which has no excellent quality though it has many middling qualities, the reunion of which only imparts to it a very slight value. Admitting that it may be combined with some very imperfect virtues, with external accomplishments, and with certain other qualities seeming good that yet hold a near neighbourhood with ill, one must acknowledge that its tendencies are all towards the ancient Gentile character, against which the Holy Fathers had so often cause to warn their contemporaries. "You ought to judge, illustrious princes," says St. Justin Martyr, addressing the emperors Marc Aurelius and Lucius Verus, "that those whom you see living not according to the rules of this Divine legislator, are not Christians, though they may confess with their lips the doctrine of Christ."

St. Chrysostom, instructing the rich in their duty to the poor, concludes that they have adopted naturalism, at least in practice. "I wish," he says, "that you had not need of these lessons, and that I had only to instruct and fortify you against the errors of Jews, Pagans, and heretics. But who can arm those who are not yet cured, and lead to the combat men who are still confined to their beds by their maladies and wounds \*." The legitimate order then recognized, was to begin by elevating men to the state that supernaturalism implies, and not till afterwards to teach them how to combat those who protested against their faith. Naturalism in later times, chiefly dominant in the upper and middle classes, for in the lower it exists more in the way of frailty than of cold systematic opposition, still presents the same character. "Why call yourself a Christian or a disciple of Christ," says St. Thomas of Villanova, at the epoch of the Reformation, "if you do not follow his rules? We have known many sects of philosophers at Athens, - Platonists, Pythagoræans, Epicuræans, Stoics,—all living according to their opinions. If you be a Christian, then let your life be conformable to your institute +." Ages then followed, during which the warning of St. Augustin would have been as needful as at the time when he exclaimed,-" Dilatamini ne sitis jugum ducentes cum infidelibus: what is intended for us is immense, and we are little to contain it i." " Nec imitandi nobis illi sunt," says St. Paulinus, " qui sub Christiano nomine gentilem vitam agunt, et aliud professione aliud conversatione testantur. Inter Christianum et Gentilem non fides tantum debet sed etiam vita distinguere, et diversam religionem per diversa opera monstrare \( \)."

Naturalism, in general, pursues to a greater or less extent the four ways described by the abbot Joachim:—"The Eastern, or that of avarice; the Western, or that of the luxurious; the Northern, or that of pride; the Southern, or that of feigned justice announcing itself as an angel of light ||." Its disciple is a compound of imperfect and opposite qualities. There is no man hath a virtue that he hath not a glimpse of: nor any man

<sup>\*</sup> Hom. 89, in Matt. 27.

<sup>+</sup> In Die Nat. Dom., Concio ii.

<sup>‡</sup> S. Aug. Epist. 121. § Epist. 4, ad Celantiam. || Super Hierem. xiii.

an attaint but he carries some stain of it. One may apply to him the line in the play of king Cambyses, and say,-

" Some good deeds he wil doo, though they be but few."

Naturalism is loud in its apologies; for it has the lapwing's cunning, that cries most when she is farthest from the nest. cries like the pedant at the duke's table,-" Where, with a mischief, have you ever found that there are any giants in Spain or caitiffs in La Mancha?" True, as Alanus says,-

> " Non semper pungit serpens, nec fundit ubique Virus, quod secum semper in ore gerit \*."

But admitting all that it would have admitted, the argument is inconclusive:

> " For neither do the spirits damn'd Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast Their specious deeds on earth."

If naturalism has the virtue, it has also the vice against which that virtue should be directed. It forms the man, as Theocritus says,-

Είδως τον φιλέοντα, τον οὐ φιλέοντ' ἔτι μᾶλλον.

who knows his friend but his enemy still more. At the best, it dictates a poor medium state between good and evil, like Menelaus, saying,

> --- νεμεσσῶμαι δὲ καὶ ἄλλω άνδοὶ ξεινοδόκω, ός κ' ἔξοχα μεν φιλέησιν, έξοχα δ' έχθαίρησιν άμείνω δ' αϊσιμα πάντα .

Its forgiveness is that of Samson with the poet:-

" At distance I forgive thee; go with that."

Seldom, however, can it be drawn even so far; for its true spirit resembles that ascribed by William of Newbury to a certain worldly prelate, named Wimund, who had fought in many battles, and, being at length taken, was blinded by his enemies; "who afterwards," he says, "came to our monastery of Belle-land, and there, for many years until his death, remained quiet. Yet he is reported to have even then said, that if he had but the eye of a sparrow his enemies should not rejoice over him ‡."

<sup>+</sup> Od. xv. 70. \* Alani Lib. Parabol. ‡ Rer. Anglic. lib. i. 24. A a 2

If you will only hear old histories, you will learn that this virtue cannot content to the end even those who deem no higher needful. "An angry woman," says the author of Magnum Speculum, "who never forgave, coming to die, when the priest brought her the Eucharist, turned from him to the wall, saying, 'As I always turned from others asking pardon, so God now turns from me, and I die reprobate\*."

Those who have read the chapter in which is shown the contrast between nature and grace, in the third book of the Imitation, will not find it difficult to detect the imperfection of naturalism in regard to all virtue. It tries to persuade men that they can obey without reserve two masters, and arrive by two diverging roads at the same destination. "But," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "if you cannot go to the same city by two roads, how foolish is it to wish by one road to go to two opposite cities; like many seculars, who thus desire to take the way of the celestial Jerusalem without leaving the road to the earthly Babylon †!" Naturalism cannot produce more than a counterfeit Catholicity: and what praise this merits is rightly estimated by the Count de Maistre in one of his letters, saying, "The honourable man who goes to mass is a more honourable man than the honourable man who does not go to it; but the scoundrel who goes to mass is more a scoundrel than the scoundrel who does not go to it ‡." The man whom naturalism sways, goes, perhaps, to mass on Sundays, and hears, for example, as on Septuagesima, "Non in finem oblivio erit pauperis; patientia pauperum non peribit in æternum;" but he marks not the words, or draws no practical inference from them; whereas the Catholic, who is supernatural in his thoughts, both hears and marks them, proving by his actions that he has drawn the right conclusion. The Catholic civilization has but one voice to cry,-

> " None will dare the loaf to steal From him who sifts and kneads the meal."

Or, as with Massinger:-

"Who cheat the poor, and from them pluck their alms, Pilfer from heaven; and there are thunderbolts From thence to beat them ever."

Naturalism feels no such horror, when the official appointed to receive the poor to hospitality for a night, will, like a total pagan, as at a town in Kent, while this page is being written, take thirty shillings from a wandering widow which he finds in

<sup>†</sup> De S. Adelesmo. ‡ Lettres, &c. i. 28.

her pocket, and then, for the fault of having accepted the shelter of the Union a single night with that money concealed on her person, threaten to imprison her, as the law allows, if she remains an hour longer in the town. The follower of naturalism in general, it is true, may be guilty of no such legal deeds in opposition to the voice of humanity; he acts honestly and well: but it is, perhaps, only when he has no occasion to act otherwise; and as the poet says.—

"Esse bonum facile est, ubi, quod vetet esse, remotum est.'

He exemplifies what is added,-

"Rara quidem virtus, quam non fortuna gubernet, Quæ maneat stabili, cum fugit illa pede."

"Virtue's but a word," he cries, "Fortune rules all." He adores precisely for its evil that "good society," which, as Goethe says, "cannot easily endure any thing estimable in its neighbourhood, and which knows how to spoil what is best." In 1815 he is content with the sentence of drawing-rooms, when, as the Count de Maistre, who was not satisfied with their verdict, says, "they pronounced the destruction of the Bourbons in secula seculorum\*." He, for one, will gladly recommend himself to such circles, by calmly acquiescing in the overthrow of the monarchy that was founded by Clovis, exalted by Charlemagne, sanctified by St. Louis,—that monarchy, as ancient as modern history, the rival of the most powerful, the protection of the weakest, and the model of all; which bore—not without reason, not without a cause, which explains the secret grudge of naturalism finding vent in this very satisfaction at its overthrow—the name of "très chrétienne."

You accuse those who take such views of being addicted to exaggeration; you protest against calumniating the age,—and those who are guilty of doing so deserve your censure; you fall into ecstasies at what is praised around you,—and truly much at which you point is admirable: but, nevertheless, the rustic poet gives a warning in homely lines that is needless, perhaps,

in no circle :--

"Ye'll try the world soon, my lad, And Andrew dear, believe me, Ye'll find mankind an unco squad, And muckle they may grieve ye. I'll no say men are villains a';
The real, hardened wicked;
Wha hae nae check but human law,
Are to a few restricked;
But, oh! mankind are unco weak,
An' little to be trusted;
If self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted!"

"How common," says Fielding, "are such ejaculations as these,—
'O! it is impossible he should be guilty of any such thing; he
must have done it by mistake. So good a man! When in
reality the mistake lies only in his character. Nor is there
any more unjust and insufficient method of judging mankind,
than by public estimation, which is oftener acquired by deceit,
partiality, prejudice, and such like, than by real desert. I will
venture to affirm, that I have known some of the best sort of
men in the world (to use the vulgar phrase) who would not
have scrupled cutting a friend's throat; and a fellow whom no
man should be seen to speak to, capable of the highest acts of
friendship and benevolence."

Naturalism, after accusing Catholicity of indulgence to sinners, complains that the fathers, as Barbeyrac, says, "place too great a difference between the man and the Christian, and, by exaggerating this distinction, prescribe impracticable rules." It is probable that this expresses the fundamental thought of those who protest against the Catholic civilization; but in the first place, it is these very adversaries of the old banner who make the distinction between men widest, either as rationalists, by the difference which they make between the people and the philosophers, or as sectarians, by their exaggerated ideas of spiritualism, almost identical with those of Manes, and by the conventional rules with which they separate all but themselves from the profession of true Christianity. In the second place, the objection is founded on a false assumption, since Catholicity, which, as we have already seen, makes all due allowance for the compound formation of man, is not to be held responsible for every oratorical sentence that can be found in the holy fathers; and it is also to the last degree unfair, since all persons who profess any regard for virtue must make the very same distinction which Catholicism is blamed for making.

"If this new preacher with the sword and feather, Could prove his doctrine for canonical, We should have a fine world."

Does not reason itself, does not even the instinct of self-preservation, proclaim the necessity of rising in a certain way above

nature? If nature is to be uncontrolled, it may not rest till it has obtained for its disciples the chain of the galley slave. Naturalism is a common soil, especially in the higher classes, where it is more concealed. St. Thomas of Villanova, alluding to it, remarks, that "in the gospel only a fourth part of the seed sown is represented as coming, in consequence, to fruit. From the hearts of those under its sole influence, the seed of the word of God recoils," he says, "like hail, exciting no devotion, no affection, no horror of vice, no fear of punishment, no desire of salvation; and this," he adds, "is the worst kind of hearers, on whose hardness no impression can be made. This is the sign of eternal reprobation,—quia qui ex Deo est, verba Dei audit. These men can listen whole days together to the fables of the world, but to the word of God, or indeed to any theme that is elevated and beautiful, not an hour \*." Naturalism produces the class of the faint-hearted, the languishing, the lukewarm, who have need of an angel of God to descend and agitate the waters; who are also the spiritually blind, having but one cry, "et ipse non est mecum." They have such a conformation of mind as is ascribed to a famous author-whatever is little seems to them great, and whatever is great seems to them little. Savonarola describing them, speaks as follows: "Incensa igni, et suffossa.-Who are these that are reduced to a smouldering state but the tepid, who externally, indeed, do not seem to be burning with the fire of lust or of pride, or of avarice? Yet within they are dried up because they are smouldering. They have no roots in the land of the living,-in the charity of Christ-in the grace of God +."

"The arrogant within the Church," says St. Odo, "answer against her, but not as the heretics placed without; for they do not contradict her by preaching error, but they do so by living perversely, thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think ‡. Their zeal is for the world; their tepidity for

virtue,-

"Thro' ev'ry sign of vanity they run; Assemblies, parks, coarse feasts, in city halls, Lectures and trials, plays, committees, balls, Wells, bedlams, executions, Smithfield scenes,

Taverns, exchanges, bridewells, drawing-rooms, Instalments, pillories, coronations, tombs, Tumblers and funerals, puppet-shows, reviews, Sales, races, rabbets (and still stranger) pews."

<sup>\*</sup> Dom. in Sex.

<sup>+</sup> Med. in Ps. Qui Reg. 4. ± Mor. in Job xxiii.

Oh, if we were to be as diligent in spiritual, as men of the world are in temporal things, how quickly," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "should we be great! Believe me, brethren," he added, "believe me again and again, admonishing you, and declaring, that unless you labour like men,—ultra communem vitam, you will receive no reward. You are workmen, and what reward, then, can you expect, if, instead of labouring, you spend your whole time in diversions \*?"

Naturalism leaves the conscience unsatisfied,—sooner or later, discouraged and ready, perhaps, for any act of despair, prompt-

ing words like those of Hamlet .-

"What would such fellows as I do Crawling between earth and heaven?"

"Through the loose follies it draws on
Heaven has found him a faint servant lately:
His goodness has gone backward, and engender'd
With his old sins again; he has lost his prayers,
And all the tears that were companions with them:
And like a blindfold man (giddy and blinded)
Thinking he goes right on still, swerves but one foot,
And turns to the same place where he set out."

When naturalism, therefore, in general, full of confidence and invested with an air of what is called respectability, proposes its claims to the regard of men, and seeks to obscure the sequel to the centre presented by the supernatural morality of the Catholic Church, which it very often leaves, as only fit for sinners and the vulgar, the first reply to it may be drawn from an observation of its imperfections, which will suggest words like those of St. Augustin, "stultum est in tali statu vivere in quo quis non audet mori."

But this opposition of all ages to the supernatural principles of Catholicism, may be distinguished from truth, not merely by its negative qualities. It is characterized by many evils of a positive kind, which can hardly fail to strike attention, and cause some men to seek elsewhere for guidance. In the first place, its evident selfishness takes away all claim to love and

respect.

Observe the character of that man who would substitute naturalism for the supernatural morality, which the lowest of the vulgar can recognize as true. The very pagans, on seeing him, would have repeated what Cicero said of Hirrus, "O dil, quam ineptus! quam se ipse amans sine rivali!" "The only antidote

against egoism is tuism," says the Count de Maistre \*." But where is the 'tu' that naturalism espouses? See what it makes of love. Its disciple can hardly be removed to that school. Ask any woman that; she will tell you so much; women cannot endure the sight of one of these adepts in philosophy. They hold all his wit for nothing. They address to him the words of our poet, saving,

"O! you are sick of self-love, And taste with a distempered appetite."

Here may be diligence, and, in a certain sense, great intellectual activity. "Of the four months I have spent in Rome," says a philosopher, who formally says that he would bring back man from Catholicism to a more natural state, "not a moment has been lost. The boast may sound great, but it does not say too much." The motive, however, with these men, is clearly seen to be the selfish desire of glory. Each might say with the poet, this is all my aim,—

"Quod monstror digito prætereuntium,"

for the maxim is,

"Paulum sepultæ distat inertiæ Celata virtus."

Naturalism accepts the pagan definition of glory. It is content if the multitude love a man, if it has faith in him, and if, with a certain admiration, it deems him worthy of honour †. It admits, that to follow every vain rumour, and all the shadows of false glory, may argue a frivolous mind; but with Cicero, it thinks what it terms "the light and splendour of true glory to be the most excellent fruit of virtue 1."

With this doctrine, it is clear that the esteem of the world is to be cultivated in the first place, let it demand what actions it may. Such a principle, however, as this, if examined closely, will turn out to be detestable. But in every form, and at every turn, this man, so constant in decrying the supernatural morals of Catholicism, will betray his selfishness. We shall hear from him, when off his guard at banquets,

"What! have I twice said well?
I pr'ythee tell me; cram us with praise and make us

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres, i. 112. 

† Cicero de Off, lib. ii. 9.

‡ In L. Pisonem.

As fat as tame things: one good deed dying tongueless Slaughters a thousand waiting upon that, Our praises are our wages."

The disciples of naturalism are so far perfect European grammarians, that they always begin with themselves, and that, unlike the Indian, who begins with the third person, they

regard as most worthy the first-Ego.

The bay-tree, if planted too near the walls of an edifice, will work its way with its roots underneath till it destroys the foundation. Such is the desire that besets the man who opposes Catholicism here. The selfish desire of praise leaves nothing sound within him: friends like himself will say,

"A favoured being—'gainst the taint
Of dissolute tongues, and jealousies, and hate,
And scorn—against all enemies prepared
All but neglect——."

On that point the reserve is prudent; and that half-empty banqueting-hall at Frankfort, on the coronation-day, described by Goethe, when the bidden guests, each fearing to sanction some neglect of his own dignity, remained without, might serve to explain its necessity. Neglect is nature's horror, and so we hear each victim of his own selfishness complain, and say,—

"My days, my friend, are almost gone, My life has been approved, And many love me; but by none Am I enough beloved."

It requires but one step more to arrive, if not at suicide, which men so naturally good, as Plutarch, seem to sanction, at least at king Richard's dreadful state, exclaiming,

> "I love myself. Wherefore? For any good That I myself have done unto myself? O, no: alas! I rather hate myself For hateful deeds committed by myself."

Ægidius Gabrielis, contrasting the diabolic with the Christian morality, remarks especially the selfishness belonging to the former, from which naturalism can easily be traced, for it consists partly in the action of an external agent driving back from grace, which would restore and reinstate nature. "The master of this system," he says, "admits that respect is due to parents and relations—sed dicit amorem incipere à seipso, et se tantum teneri ad pietatem, quando sine suo incommodo ei satisfacere potest." The reverence for relations, for parents, and even for

ancestors, which the Ménagier de Paris requires, insisting that a failure in it is subject for confession, it laughs down, as the folly of a benighted age. Its gratitude may be inferred from the words-quid vultis mihi dare, et ego eum vobis tradam? In fact, that master teaches that nothing is due, strictly speaking, to any benefactor, for every one, in doing well, thought only of doing service to himself; and thus, by a perverse judgment all human beneficence is taken away. When his disciple sees his own advantage concerned, no one can seem more liberalnon sum sicut cæteri hominum; decimas do omnium quæ possideo; but when that interest ceases, he ceases to be liberal. When he exercises liberality, he blames all who do not perform the same actions as himself, and he proclaims all to be ungrateful who do not thank him instantly. If the property of others, by any revolution or State policy, be unjustly taken away without his suffering any loss, he thinks it justly done, or at least pronounces it a fact accomplished; but if he should be himself injured by it, he thinks it unjust, and all the world must aid him in redressing it. Whatever is wicked in the rulers of the Republic, he thinks just, provided it does not compromise his own advantage, and that it be done under the pretext of public good. In fine, this inordinate lover regards even the sacraments of Christ as a miser regards his money, that is, loving only himself\*. St. Paulinus, patriarch of Aquileia, warns duke Henry from contracting this disposition, which he deems synonymous with the reprobate life. "Let us not be carnal," he says to him, "that is, living carnally in the world; for the Apostle says, 'si secundum carnem vixeritis moriemini. He lives secundum carnem, who lives secundum seipsum, that is, who goeth whither he wishes, who sleeps when he wishes, speaks what he wishes, and to whom he wishes, and where he wishes; who eats and drinks when he wishes, and as much as he wishes; who laughs and jokes improperly amongst whom he wishes, and when he wishes; lastly, who seeks whatever is sweet to his sense of smelling, whatever is soft to the touch, delectable to the eyes, and pleasant to the body; who exercises and follows in whatever way he wishes, and whenever he wishes, because he covets carnally all things, lawful and unlawful, who delights in beautiful dresses, and horses, and arms, as he wishes, and when he wishes; and who thus lives, and is delighted not according to God, but carnally; and who fulfils all the desires of his flesh as he wishes, and when he wishes +."

Such is the selfishness of naturalism, ever seeking to corrupt, by insinuations directed against it, the supernatural morality of

<sup>\*</sup> Specimina Mor. Diabol. vi. &c.

<sup>†</sup> Lib. Exhortat. ad Henricum, Ducem Forojulien. c. 17.

the Catholic Church, while not all those torrents of private passions, all these streams of cupidities flowing into it, can ever taint this great ocean, any more than the waters of the rivers can diminish the saltness of the sea.

"The way of our own will," says Catholicity, "seems right, and leads to the abyss. Voluntas habet pænam,—et necessitas parit coronam." Such manners cannot obscure the truth of the supernatural principle. They cannot even long satisfy the vicious. As Sidonius Apollinaris says, "omnes placebant sibi, omnes omnibus displicebant \*."

Impatience under contradiction, an indomitable spirit to resist whatever is displeasing, follow as a necessary consequence from such egotism. "Silence," cries the king Don Alfonso to the Cid, in the cloister of St. Peter of Cardena, when the latter spoke reproachfully to the monk Bermuda. "There are things in you, Cid, which could make the stones speak. For the least

trifle you would make a field of battle of the Church."

Naturalism, again, is characterized by faithlessness and false-hood, while professing greater confidence in the virtue of its disciples than the Catholic Church ventures to express with regard to her own holiest children; as may be witnessed in the ordination of deacons, when the pontiff sings, "et nos quidem tanquam homines divini sensus et summæ rationis ignari, horum vitam, quantum possumus æstimamus. Te autem, Domine, quæ nobis sunt ignota non transeunt, te occulta non fallunt. Tu cognitor es secretorum; tu scrutator es cordium †."

"The reply of those invited, 'rogo te habe me excusatum,' sounds," says Rupertus, "like humility; but the act of refusing to come, showed the latent pride. And thus do carnal men act now. When it is said to them, 'convertere, Deum sequere, mundum relinque,' they answer, 'ora pro me quia peccator sum: hoc facere non possum.' Calling himself a sinner seems like humility, but adding, 'I cannot be converted,' demonstrates pride. From such deceitful lips may we be delivered ‡!" Well

might the poet say,

"——Oh! think how few Of all thou knowest thyself are earnest men."

Naturalism in men of religious profession assumes a form peculiarly odious. It creates the ecclesiastic, who resembles him described by Cervantes as "understanding satire better than vespers." Cæsar of Heisterbach, though in an instance which seems to argue an ignorance of canon law in himself, represents

<sup>\*</sup> Epist. vii. 9. + Pontiff. Rem. + Pontiff. Rem.

such characters in contrast with the generous fervour of young knights devoted to the cause of religion, and to the assistance of the weak, who need protection \*. These are the men who merit the Shakspearian reproof,—

"You tender more your person's honour Than your high profession spiritual."

Sometimes their natural views are found in combination even with pharisaical ostentation; and an instance of this kind occurs in the revelations of St. Bridget. "The vainly-wise bishop," she heard, "is like the butterfly with painted wings. colour signifies that he disputes much about the passion of Christ, and the miracles of the saints, that he may be called holy, while they are far from his heart. The blue colour signifies that he seems not to care for temporal things, but to be all celestial. The white signifies that he is, in vestments, pure and religious; but all these colours are worthless; for they are like the tints on the wings of the butterfly; if you touch them, they adhere to the fingers and turn to dust." Then, after a long reproof of earthly-minded priests, " at hearing this the senior bishop exclaimed, - O, O, O, ablata est mitra, et ecce apparet quod latebat subfus. Where is now the honourable bishop? where the venerable priest? where the poor brother? Certainly gone is the bishop, who was anointed with oil in the apostolic office and in purity of life. There remains the servant of the dunghill, spotted with fatness! Gone is the priest, who was consecrated with holy words that he should change lifeless and dead bread into the vivifying God. There remains the deceiful traitor, who sold through avarice Him who redeemed all through charity. Gone is the poor brother, who with an oath renounced the world. There remains one who is about to be judged and justly condemned for pride and ostentation +." In every form, naturalism in the sacerdotal state is hateful in the estimation of men. It forms the priest spoken of in the gospel of the good Samaritan, who sees the wounded man on the road-side and passes on without seeking to bear him assistance. It forms the character against which the Catholic Church for nineteen centuries has had to contend, in general councils, in provincial synods, in the weekly chapter of each diocese. As to the future consequences, the Church has never concealed her appreciation of them. In all the visions of hell related by monks and bishops, we hear of monks and bishops being seen among the reprobate; by which narratives they sought to warn men of their own order from the naturalism

<sup>\*</sup> Lib. ii. c. 27.

opposed to faith\*. And, in fact, those ancient codes providing against lukewarm spirits—as, for instance, where precautions are given to detect monks feigning themselves sick, or too infirm to discharge their regular duties†—leave no one admitted amongst them ignorant of the danger. Naturalism, in men of all estates, sooner or later leads its disciple to a position in which he might hear such words as those of the Roman consuls to Pyrrhus, when they revealed to him the treason of his physician,—" It appears that you are not happy in the choice either of your friends or of your enemies." Its friends resemble that Sicca, of whom Cicero, speaking of those who were faithful to himself, only added these words implying his treachery:—"Sicca dixerat se mecum fore, sed Brundisio discessit‡."

—— "So beauty, pomp,
With every sensuality our giddiness
Doth frame an idol, are unconstant friends,
When any troubled passion makes assault
On the unguarded castle of the mind."

Its enemies are beyond reach;

—— "Placed in those imperial heights Where, countermur'd with walls of diamond, It finds the place impregnable:"

for truth always gets above falsehood, as oil does above water: and what is supernatural must in the end prevail; while all these partners in the waltz of the world will be forgotten as soon as the ball is over.

William of Newbury says that the messengers who came from Germany to England, relating the death of the duke of Austria, to whom king Richard had not yet paid the whole of his ransom, "came, having milk and honey on their tongues §." Such messengers come to every man from the camp opposed to the supernatural standard: and it is a sense of the danger which ensues that makes our poet say of open profligates,

—— "One owes them thanks that they are thieves Professed; that they work not in holier shapes; For there is boundless theft in limited professions."

"In this profound silence and solitude," says Marina de Escobar, I heard our Lord's voice, saying, Lo, you see my Christian people, which I redeemed with my blood, and on which I daily confer so many favours, how it is at present nearly lost, nothing

<sup>\*</sup> Mag. Spec. 672.

<sup>‡</sup> Ep. xiv. 4.

<sup>†</sup> Regula Magistri, c. lxix.

<sup>§</sup> Rer. Anglic. v. 6.

being found in it but lies, frauds, sins, abominations, incredulities, and small knowledge of my truths; for having an obscured reason they err like the blind \*" Her illustrious fellow-countryman, St. Thomas of Villanova, had made similar observations: "O long desired, and still deferred reform of the Church!" he exclaims, in one of his sermons; "O, if it were given us to behold it before we die! Believe me, brethren, so long as these manners prevail in the Church, in vain we shall make war against the Turks †." These fruits of naturalism are sung by Dante, as having been heard sorrowfully commemorated even in Paradise, in the words,

---- "Faith and innocence Are met with but in babes; each taking leave Ere cheeks with down are sprinkled‡."

It is not such experience that can obstruct the avenue to the Catholic Church, let the pretensions alleged against her claim be what they may. Naturalism betrays also a disposition to employ the arts and policy which belong to the weakness and falsehood of a savage state. "There is the language of the world," says d'Avila, "the language of the flesh, and the language of the devil:" and these are the idioms with which it is familiar. The demon says, like Ulysses, "now do this and afterwards be just. I know that you abhor deceit; but it is sweet to succeed; we shall return again to justice."

νῦν δ' εἰς ἀναιδὲς ἡμέρας μέρος βραχὺ δός μοι σεαυτόν, κἀτα τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον κέκλησο πάντων εὐσεβέστατος βροτῶν §."

One may apply to it the words of the Psalmist,—" Dilexisti omnia verba præcipitationis in lingua dolosa ||." You will never find it practising the maxim that an honest tale speeds best, being plainly told. It has so far the wit of Mangis, in old Romance, who, when fabricating a falsehood, pretending to be what he is not, calls himself "Kermlet the Sincere." It will show itself like the serpent, friend to Eve, saying,—" The way is ready and not long; if thou accept my conduct, I can bring thee thither soon." When,—

"He leading, swiftly roll'd In tangles, and made intricate seem straight To mischief swift."

<sup>\*</sup> Vita Ven. Virg. Mar. p. ii. lib. ii. c. 8.

<sup>+</sup> Dom. ii. Quad. Concio i. et pro Exped. advers. Turc.

<sup>‡ 27. §</sup> Phil. 84. || 49.

Naturalism, pretending ever to be simple, seeks to charm the judgment,—

"Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb."

"Inordinate love," says Ægidius Gabrielis, describing the diabolic morality, "easily finds a cloak for its folly; saying, 'that the counsel indeed is good, but not suited for this age; that the state of the Church is now different, and that no private man can now live otherwise than according to custom. Yea, it is even pride and presumption to wish to be wiser than others, and to correct others. Nor is it possible in this age. Therefore there must be indulgence to human frailty\*." So it makes our virtues lie in the interpretation of the time. And then follows such scenes as Antonio de Guevara describes, when Madame Maria de Padilla, during the rebellion of her husband, entered the treasury of the church of Toledo, where are the holy relies, to take away the gold and silver to pay her soldiers: entering on her knees with her hands joined, and her head covered with a black veil, striking her breast, and weeping, while lighted tapers were carried before her, which makes the

narrator cry, "O blessed pillage, glorious robbery!"

The subjection of naturalism to every force directed against virtue is so complete, that we may say of its disciples what Cicero affirmed of the Greeks: "diuturna servitute ad nimiam assentationem eruditi +." What Protestantism and rationalism, acting as external enemies, would take away, naturalism within the Church would prohibit: so that the prophet seems to refer to it in the words, "Dicam Aquiloni: Da! et Austro: Noli prohibere i." Then the words on every tongue are tolerance and liberality. "Louis XVIII. le roi Très-chrétien, had sheltered himself from all reproach of bigotry," says Chateaubriand. "He possessed in his council of state an apostate married bishop, who had officiated in the Champ de Mars, M. de Talleyrand; a concubinist priest, M. Louis; and an abbé who did not practise his religion, M. de Montesquieu." Naturalism cannot conceal its adaptation to the intellectual and social wants of those Catholics who, as theologians say, have fallen from the state of grace, and who are become, in consequence, a mass of contradictions, as Cicero says, "propter multiplicem hominis voluntatem." Naturalism is the asylum to receive those who have once, perhaps, when very young,-though they have now forgotten it,-been pious; who have read all, heard all, seen all that you can allege against practical infidelity and a life without

<sup>\*</sup> Specimina Moralis Diab. xvi.

<sup>+</sup> Ep. i.

energy for good. You entreat them to examine such a book; they remember enough to know that they have read it long ago. Timidly, allusion is made to the Sacraments; a look pronounces that they individually must be excused. Well, but only let them converse with certain persons; they answer, perhaps with forced laughter, that they know them longer and better than you do. They know all. What wins them is what they once renounced; and to that they turn. It is in this systematic obstinate looking back that naturalism consists: and it will not deny its nature, but prove that it is not fit for either a life of virtue and honour in this world, or for that sanctified reign of truth which the kingdom of God involves and crowns.

"When we have past the threshold of the gate
Which the soul's ill affection doth disuse,
Making the crooked seem the straighter path \*,"

the obstacle presented by this view of human duties will not arrest our steps. Naturalism produces in general our daily world's true worldlings. Look ye:—

"Some such there are, whose liberal contents
Swarm without care in every sort of plenty;
Who, after full repasts, can lay them down
To sleep; and they sleep:—in which silence
Their very dreams present 'em choice of pleasurés,
Here heaps of gold, there increments of honours,
Now change of garments, then the votes of people."

" As a tree that is allowed to extend its branches on all sides never attains to a great elevation, so," observes St. Bonaventura, "the side wanderings of the mind, by the occasions of this world, prevent it from rising to God. The tendency of all this opposition to the supernatural element, is to impart to men and human actions, the inclination of the Indian fig or Banian tree, of which the lateral branches shoot down in the direction of the earth and there root themselves, till, in course of time, a single tree extends itself to a grove †." Naturalism spreads thus; causes men to fix themselves in the earth, while a new offspring forms round the parent to perpetuate the same phenomenon. Its moral results may be compared also to the cones of the pinus picea, or epicia, which are always inclined towards the earth, while those of the common fir are pointed to the sky. " Non videbit cum venerit bonum; sed habitabit in siccitate et terra salsuginis et inhabitabilis. This is pronounced," says the abbot Joachim, "against men who cannot see good, being

<sup>\*</sup> Purg. 10.

blinded with temporal things\*." Yet naturalism pretends to be content with its eternal banishment; and says at every turn,

----- "Mihi mens interrita mansit, Exiliis contenta suis."

"It is surprising," says a recent author, attached to the cause of his contemporaries, "that at present, in the absence of the elevated motives of the middle ages, men are not much worse than they are †."

> ——— " Quantum est, quod desit in istis Ad plenum facinus ! quam transitus inde paratus ‡."

Naturalism costs dearer often than the fatal necklace of Eriphila, for which she sacrificed Amphiaraüs §. At this pass of the forest there is need of the advice of St. Augustin, saying, "vade extirpa sylvosa dumeta avaritiæ ||; for here, instead of the Spanish sentence, "I despise wealth but not honour," the confessions of Pierce Ploughman's vision may be heard on all sides:—

"Whoso hath more than I, That angereth me sore. And thus I live loveless Like a Luther ¶ dog."

Allusion to this state of mind occurs in the Revelations of St. Bridget, where it is said, that Christians, by a detestable abuse, practise usury like the Jews-" et verè Christiani usurarii cupidiores sunt Judeis \*\*: and, in fact, wherever it prevails, there can be no distinction in any ages made in favour of the former. But what argument against the supernatural morality can be grounded on the testimony of such Christians, resolved to maintain their reputation by never parting with what the law gives them, and infected thus with the inordinate appetite for riches, contrary to the order of love? Conscience and wealth are not always neighbours. Strange work has this spirit made in the political order. "This religion," it cries, "will keep us slaves and beggars." Let us change our copy. So then "useless" monks are suppressed for a button or a lace manufactory. Such is naturalism in government and in public opinion. The Count de Maistre says, that a corporation teaching, preaching, catechizing, civilizing, and instituting, is not worth in its eyes a

\* Sup. Hierem.

+ Valery, Curiosités et Anecdotes Italiennes.

‡ Met. xv. § Od. xi. 325. || Conf. xiii, 19. ¶ Vicious. \*\* Lib. iv. 33.

shop of cutlery. It would give the regeneration of a human soul for a yard of taffeta. It effaces from its money "Christus regnat, vincit, imperat," to substitute "Cinq francs." Taste, tact, talent, fail with virtue. The beauty of the world, after all, depends upon its being brought back to order and truth. If the supernatural light be intercepted, there remains only a ball of

earth revolving in space.

Naturalism agrees with the opinion of the famous squire of Cervantes, who says,—" Upon a good foundation a good building may be raised, and the best bottom and foundation in the world is money." At one time, respectability is its god. A great French author, speaking of its followers, says that "a pension is in their eyes a sacrament; it imprints a character, like the priesthood and marriage: a head once pensioned can never cease to be." Its disciple answers to the description of Balzac, by a contemporary :-- " Each time that in any production of his pen he touches money, his hands tremble; he rises to enthusiasm; his expression becomes sonorous; his style golden. The page seems to sparkle with the hieroglyphics of a bank-note. One feels that he loves riches as an artist, as a man fascinated, as an initiated alchymist, who penetrates human secrets, and all the social mysteries that are condensed in gold money." "Divine money," he exclaims, "the soul of all things sublunary! Money, I adore thee. It comes near the nature of a spirit, and is so subtle it can creep in at a cranny, be present at the most inward councils, and betray them: money! it opens locks, draws curtains, buys wit, sells honesty, pulls down churches, and builds alms-houses." Don Antonio de Guevara, casting his usual penetrating glance on naturalism assuming the disguise that a purely Catholic state of society required, replies to those who allege that its followers keep their money, not from avarice, but to give alms,-" Ah, if this were true my pen would drop from my fingers; but I mourn to see them esteem honour so lightly, and conscience so much lighter; for I do not believe them; since I see every poor man that asks alms from them retiring with a 'God help you.' If they say that they keep it in order to build a church, I answer, God rejects such gifts, nor does the Church admit them; for nothing is acceptable to her which is united with the cry of the poor. If they say they keep it in order to have masses said for their soul, I reply, I would praise them if they did not incur a greater danger; but I have no hope from the thirty masses offered for the dead man, who, when alive, sent two thousand persons to the hospital. I should hold it safer if princes and great lords would, while they are alive, expend their money in marrying poor orphan maidens, rather than in ordering many masses to be said for themselves after

they are dead \*." Generally, again, associated with naturalism. is an abandonment of the soul to the meanest and lowest pleasures incident to a senile state; and a clear understanding of this fact ought to remove the impediment with which it seeks to obstruct the avenues to truth. One of its gods is what the moderns term Comfort: devotion to which in the thirteenth century we find placed among mortal sins, under the title in French of "Charnalité," which consists, it was said, in pampering the flesh: "Comme dormir en bons lits, reposer longuement, avoir plus chier perdre quatre messes que un somme." Ah! why should any seek to excuse such grovelling tastes? "Wherefore sully the entrusted gem of high and noble life with thoughts so sick?" Of this mortal sin, the book goes on to say confession must be made in these terms,-" j'ay curieusement pensé de l'aise de ma charongne; j'ay plus servi à moi et à ma char et y ay mis plus grant entente que on service de mon doulx créaateur t." With that cross which consists in manly endurance and in the generous resistance of temptations to selfish pleasure.with that cross which nature itself would impose, and which the Catholic has to carry till his last breath, -this system of morality has nothing to do. Naturalism, combining what enervates, with all cruelty, knows not what it is; though nature itself will blush when men worshipping it affect strains so effeminate, sounds of such delicacy as are but fawnings upon the sloth of

Naturalism leads to the life described by Antonio de Guevara, in his letter to the duke of Alva, Don Fadrique de Toledo, saying, "He who has many dogs and hawks, and gives great sumptuous banquets,—he who keeps open gates for card and dice players,—he who defends the wicked, and apologizes for the banished, is called a gentleman; and certes not without reason; for such are more the ornaments of a Gentile than of a Christian

knight!"

"Alas! how oft in haughty mood God's creatures they oppress! Or else, neglecting a' that's guid, They riot in excess! Baith careless and fearless Of either heaven or hell! Esteeming and dreming It's a' an idle tale."

Naturalism will necessarily deem incompatible with what it is resolved to follow, a religion which denounces the life of the

<sup>\*</sup> L'Horloge des Princes, lib. iii. 1180.

<sup>+</sup> Ménagier de Paris, D. i. a. 3.

dissipated and vain-glorious; as when, in the thirteenth century, persons intending to confess were told to say, if conscious of such guilt, "Je me suis eslevé et ay eu orgueil du grans despens que j'ay ancun fois fais et des grans oultraiges et superfluités, comme de viandes grandes et oultrageuses, comme à donner grans mengiers et belles chambres, assembler grans compaignies, &c. \*" "Christ has two schools," says St. Anthony of Padua, "for his disciples in this life-in the first the study is charity: in the second is taught humility and meekness; and they who do not study in these schools can never be disciples of Christ +." In the capitular instructions at Mont Cassino, in 1273, among the sins which God is said to detest, are reckoned two of the essential fruits of naturalism in the higher classes, namely, "ambitio dignitatumverecundia de pauperibus amicis ‡." Naturalism in the low finds its representative in that famous squire, "who knows not who he is one of, but who knows very well that he will never get such elegant scum from Basilius's flesh-pots as he has done from Camacho's." Among the rich it falls in admirably with the habits of Sir Andrew and his boon companions, however well they may perceive that such a life does harm to the wit. With glass in hand it is best prepared for eloquence, and worthy of hearing such eulogiums as the old compliment-" How bold is this Bacchanal"-

#### ώς θρασύς ὁ Βάκχος κοὐκ ἀγύμναστος λόγων §!

Plutarch, apparently without intending to blame him, says, "that the mind of Lamprias, his grandfather, was never more fruitful or inventive than when he had well drank. Certes, tickling philosophy all this! But, with such habits, naturalism can as little be expected to form a just appreciation of the morality opposed to it, as it can long obscure the avenue to truth. With the pagans it gave out that the apostles were drunk; and with the moderns, judging of the representations of ecstasy and ascetic rapture by Catholic painters, it has no higher capabilities than those of the popular English author, who says to the public, delighted with his pictures of Italy, "Neither am I partial to angels who play on musical instruments for the edification of sprawling monks, apparently in liquor;" to which kind of criticism St. Augustin seems to allude when saying, "Who, in fact, more drunken than the martyrs?" The poet, regarding the pleasures that naturalism promises, recognizes other fatal results, and says-

> "I wave the quantum o' the sin, The hazard of concealing;

<sup>\*</sup> Ménagier de Paris, D. i. a. 2.

<sup>+</sup> Fev. iv. Hebd. ii. in Quad.

<sup>†</sup> Hist. Cassinensis, viii. 467.

<sup>§</sup> Bacc. 491.

#### But, oh! it hardens a' within, And petrifies the feeling."

"Crux Christi," says St. Bernard, speaking of such systematic perversion, "voluptati adversatur, et voluptas cruci. Et quomodo possunt excusari voluptatum amatores, ut non sint Christi persecutores? Rei enim fiunt mortis Christi, etsi non ut persecutores, tamen ut tantæ rei contemptores."

The conscious and formal opposition to the supernatural morality of Catholicism, gradually condacts men, after dwelling a long time in the suburbs of conscience, which are ever dangerous, to that condition when their testimony cannot be received in evidence on any point concerned with virtue. In the old moral play they seem to be described, when, in reply to the question—

"What company was in your shyppe that came over?"

## Hycke-Scorner answers-

"Syr, I wyll sayd you to understande,
There were good felowes above fyve thousande,
There was falshode, favell, and jolyte
Ye, theves and helpers, with good company,
Lyers, backbyters, and flaterers the whyle,
Braulers, lyers, with grete murderers,
Oppressers of people, with many swerers.
There was false lawe with oryble vengeaunce,
Frowarde obstynacyon with myschevous governaunce,
With many other of the devylles offycers;
And haterede, that is so myghty and strange."

"The Lord shows," says Salvian, "how unwilling He is to punish even the worst sinners, saying 'Quod clamor Sodomorum ad se ascenderit;' that is to say, 'My mercy persuades me to spare, but such a cry of sinners compels me to punish\*." What signifies the blame of such a multitude? Of what weight is their opinion?—their sentence? Will you commit Catholicism to the censure and pleasure of men who say to each other, with Simonides, in Massinger's old law,—

"Whatso'er we do, speaking by fits, or sleeping by turns,
This shall be sure to be condemned—
Sleeping or waking, we are resolved on that,
Before we sit upon it!"

"Naturalism is found, by experience, to combine perfectly with brutal violence, and the approval of those fearful outcries from the press, and from the political banquet halls, which would lead

<sup>\*</sup> Salivan, de Gubernatione Dei, lib. i. 19.

back Europe to the jurisprudence of the Huns and Heruli," as the Count de Maistre says \*. It revives in our age the scenes described by Tacitus, when, "Exacto per scelera die, novissimum malorum fuit lætitia †." It creates a generation of conspirators against the order of things established by supernaturalism, and forms men whose criterion of excellence is the degree of sorrow which a measure causes among the just .- "Sibi quisque dux et instigator: et præcipuum pessimorum incitamentum quod boni mærebant t." 'A man need not be a profound philosopher to conclude that these consequences constitute another reason why the claims of naturalism must be rejected. The mind, Catholically and supernaturally moved, asks life. The mind, given up to sensuality, death. Antonio de Escobar cites instances in proof. "Pete à me quod vis et dabo tibi-licet dimidium regni mei," said Herod to his daughter; and the same promise was given by Assuerus to Esther, "Quæ est petitio tua, Esther, ut detur tibi? Etiam si dimidiam partem regni mei petieris, impetrabis." The ascetic, represented by the queen, asked that the lives of the Israelites might be spared. Naturalism, by the mouth of the dancer, at her mother's suggestion, asked that the Baptist might be put to death o. Naturalism, it is true, in these later ages, assumes a mild aspect, and loudly professes toleration. It practises it towards all but the Catholic religion; but towards that it is generally ill-disposed, and sometimes even inflamed with hatred, which it hardly can disguise. Still, however, it wishes, like a certain parliament in 1851, to pass for tolerant; only, as in Russia, in 1815, it will consider it a capital offence to make conversions, and to have said publicly, "that there can be only one religion true and safe for the soul." For having said so, the General Wiasmitinoff, governor of St. Petersburg, in virtue of an imperial ukase, arrives, on the 16th of December, with guards, at the house of the Jesuits, and announces that they are condemned to banishment; and naturalism has but one voice to approve of the decree. In many official pieces, on that occasion, relative to the expulsion of the Jesuits from St. Petersburg, it was said, that "Russia has been always distinguished for its spirit of toleration." The same is pronounced elsewhere, in every speech before parliament; but the fact is, that a religion is not tolerated when it is not allowed to follow its doctrines and its maxims; and when the principles of another religion are transported into it. Therefore, where the free intercourse with the pope, the hierarchy, or any other essential adjunct of Catholicism is assailed, where the church is subjected to a personage who knows nothing about her; -as

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres du Ct. de M. i. 5. + Hist. i. 46.

<sup>‡</sup> i. 38. § In Evang. Comment. vi. 84.

when a Lutheran minister of state prohibited the canonization of a Catholic saint, under a sovereign who was neither Catholic nor Lutheran, but who guaranteed the free exercise of their religion to his numerous Catholic subjects, the Catholic Church is by the fact, so far as law can reach its victim, suppressed; and the tolerance of such governments amounts to a virtual persecution, "than which no kind can be more envenomed, more skilful, or, perhaps, even in the end," as he adds, "more efficacious." In regard to private life, naturalism, it must be confessed, is ready to play an odious part. What will not ambition and revenge descend to? Naturalism decides that spite with spite is best repaid. You will have no supernatural moralists near you; but then be not surprised if you should see verified, at your door, the words of Rutebeuf—

"Mal voisin done mal matin."

There is a voice that will reach you of a different kind from the chant of holy choirs, and a form unlike that of the hooded head—

> "Vox fera, trux vultus, verissima Martis imago, Non coma, non ulla barba resecta manu \*."?

"It is remarkable," says brother Gualter, "that one of the chief men implicated in the cruel murder of Count Charles the Good, and who died for the crime on the gibbet, when in prosperity, hearing his domestics speaking often amongst themselves of the passion of our Lord, and of His patience, used to say, 'I wonder why he should wish to submit to such insults.' Certainly, 'Si mihi hujusmodi garciones taliter insultarent,'—I would soon avenge myself on them, and turn their scorn on their own heads t." Naturalism agrees, with the arch-fiend, that

Doing or suffering ——."

In politics, therefore, it lays down for maxim, that the sovereignty ought to be esteemed, not by its essential character, but by its physical power, so that, instead of the ancient Catholic maxim, which required each prince to be asked, Who are you? it has for sole question, What can you? Provided force be on its side, it cares little for the form, and therefore, an infidel author lately, under the influence of the common error, which identifies Bonaparte with the revolution, who, on the contrary, as the Count de Maistre observes, "compressed

<sup>\*</sup> iv. 7. † Vita S. Caroli Mart. c. xxxviii. † De Maistre, Lettres, i, 66.

the revolution, while making use of it," says that "the instinct of active, brave, able men throughout the middle class every where, has pointed out Napoleon as the incarnate democrat." He is their type, because they think that he represents force and violence unrestrained by any principle except that of selfinterest, understood as they understand it. He is their brother, because, to use the words of Tacitus, "quæ alii scelera, hic remedia vocat \*."

Those who treat on woods say, that "persons who possess land near a forest of pine, must take heed to their boundaries; for that these and all other resinous trees, extending their number by seed, gradually advance, so that the borderers may lose some of their land without perceiving it †." The same caution should be recommended to those who consort with men under the influence of naturalism. Phyleus dared not ask Hercules the strange guest whence he had the lion's skin,

# --- γαλεπον δ' έτερον νόον ιδμεναι άνδρός 1.

Naturalism is not troubled with scruples respecting acquisitions of any kind. "We respected the rights of former injustice," says Chateaubriand, speaking of a generation that had generally

adopted it, "whatever comes from violence is sacred."

Naturalism provides a state of things so distracted with constant occupation and excitement, that men have not time to be virtuous. "Your nation," said the Count de Maistre, "is too busy to be just \( \int \)." For a contrary state of things to arise, the world must witness what St. Jerome saw, describing it in these words, "The Huns learn the Psalter,-Hunni Psalterium discunt;" that is, they have become supernaturalists. These are the considerations that serve to explain the words used by the Church in ordaining clerks, "ut dum ignominiam sæcularis habitus deponunt | ."

It is not the soiled brown of the rustic or mechanic youth that the Church deems shameful. It is the purple of the rich oppressor; and well may that be stigmatized! for what more ignominious than the injustice allied to naturalism, which that habit so frequently involves, when you shall see in the man who

follows it, as Dante says,-

"A unit for his virtue; for his vices No less a mark than million ¶ ?"

<sup>†</sup> Varenne-Fénille, Mémoires sur l'Administration Forestière.

I Theocrit. § Lettres, i. 132.

Pont. Rom. de Clerico faciendo. T Par. 19.

What ignominy in the confusion which ensues when the principles of the Jacobins are acted on by kings, when the most sacred principles are attacked by their natural defenders! When the most illustrious English assembly will vote and judge like a lodge of French or Italian free masons! "Ah! it is then," says the Count de Maistre, "that we should put on mourning \*." What ignominy, even in the want of forethought, which the injustice of such naturalism betrays! Goethe was at Strasbourg. when the Jesuits were expelled from that city, and he was struck by observing that the measure was approved of both by the Protestants and by many of the old religion: "how glad are men," he says on that occasion, "when they get rid of an opponent, or only of a guardian? and the herd does not reflect. that where there is no dog, it is exposed to wolves." The supernatural mind was not obnoxious to such reproaches, its disposition being expressed by the popular voice, saying,-

> "Therfore let us preesthode honour, And folowe theyr doctryne for our soules socoure; We be theyr shepe, and they shepherdes be, By whome we all be kepte in suerty †."

Ægidius Gabrielis observes how differently naturalism regards the same in regard to duty and justice, according as it may be self-interest, and the interest of others that is in question. for restitution, in general its disciple says, with Gothrio in Massinger, "I do not like the Romanish restitution 1." "Patientiam habe in me, et omnia reddam tibi;" "but as for restitution in particular, it cries 'Redde quod debes.'" Naturalism had never more legitimate representatives than the courtiers of Elizabeth; and old Harrison says of them, and a late writer thinks from another passage, that he does not mean to confine his censure to one sex, that "they are the worst men when they come abroad that any man shall either hear or read of!" Naturalism, no doubt, in spite of its injustice, may, for many persons, succeed in obstructing the avenue to the centre, and in rendering Catholicism both odious and inefficient; for, as Sidonius Appollinaris says, "there is a certain power in evil manners, so that the crimes of a few can disfigure the innocence of many, while, on the contrary, the virtues of a few cannot excuse the crimes of many, by communicating virtue to them 6;" but the Divine origin of the morality of the Catholic Church cannot be, from all men, concealed by the preten-

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres, i. 61.

<sup>‡</sup> The Bashful Lover.

<sup>†</sup> Every Man a Morality. § Ep. lib. vii. 9.

sions of a system which ends in realizing the curse of Timon, when

"Religion, peace, justice, truth, domestic awe, Night-rest and neighbourhood, instruction, manners, Mysteries and trades, degrees, observances, Customs and laws, decline to their confounding Contraries——."

But these are not always its results. Whole nations collectively adopting it advance with peace to great prosperity? This is not absolutely to be granted; for the popular mind, even where it seems most ignorant, may be still, in some degree, influenced by the old supernatural principles transmitted vaguely by a thousand natural channels: but admitting even that this objection were founded on fact, natural virtues having natural rewards, still let the immediate and ultimate consequences of naturalism be what they may, this at least is certain, that it wants charity-that it wants a permanently efficient principle of benevolence, and even of simple regard for others; that it wants actually the power of loving and admiring either virtue or truth, which is a sufficient reason why its testimony, when it opposes the Catholic religion, should never be received. How many things would men love which might, by sweet affection, lead them to the centre, if they did not give up their minds to be formed by a false naturalism, which kills love within them. Though ever so misled by treacherous guides, yet might they love Catholicity for the virtues it inspires, for its valiancy, its independence, its gentleness, and its justice. Ay, but all these are slandered. Yet might they love it as having conferred the greatest benefits upon their country; for all their best prized rights and liberties were won in ancient times. Ay, but they think it useless to read history. Yet might they love it to uprear their State, to secure stability and just freedom. Ay, but perhaps they hear it would enslave them. Yet might they love it as favourable to all that in human art is beautiful. Ay, but I fear they cannot love at all. Truly we may say with a celebrated author, that "we descry land more and more every day," and what little we are to expect from keeping company with this opposition to the supernatural banner. Not all its followers may be so frank as to say with one of its most faithful representatives,-

> "Toute herbe a pour moi sa couleuvre; Et la haine monte à mon œuvre Comme un bouc au cytise en fleur."

But our companions here, by their conversation, directed

against what is good and holy can explain the poet's expression,—

### "Tresque micant linguæ ----,"

for the rapidity of their utterance against holy charity, and all that it produces in heaven and on earth, make their tongues, like those of serpents,—appear three darts \*. Ah! what sharp stings are in their mildest words! They are such pointed things, as, like smooth thorns, pierce the soul, and wound like lightning, leaving the garment whole and unsinged. Naturalism forms a confraternity, of which the office imposed upon all members is, as Antonio de Guevara says, "to bury live men, and to disinter the dead." In their books they make use of a table of contents, as the Count de Maistre says, "to lie and to calumniate." In their daily conversation, in their newspapers, in their reviews, they distort and misrepresent all virtue.

The true centre to which such Christians must belong, is indicated in an old legend by the following narrative, which, however ludicrous, can be repeated with utility. "A certain old woman," it says, "found a youth one day very sad, sitting under a tree, holding a purse of money, who, being questioned by her, replied that he was a demon, and that he sought to set at variance a man and his wife, but wanting speech, he besought her to aid him, and promised the purse to her if she would undertake it. The hag agreed, went to the house, insinuated her mischief by tales told separately, first to the wife, then to the husband, and succeeded in causing a deep and permanent discord. Then the demon said to her, 'I have been thirty years trying to effect what you accomplished in three days. You have the true accent of hell, and have a better right to be there than I,' and so saying, he carried her off†."

Some will think, perhaps, that to recite such legends is not treating the subject with decent solemnity, but surely, as Fielding says, "a man may speak truth with a smiling countenance." And, as the same author says, without, probably, having ever read the above narrative, which agrees so well with his opinion, "vice hath not a more abject slave, society produces not a more odious vermin, nor can the devil receive a guest more worthy of him, nor possibly more welcome to him, than a slanderer."

Detraction, however, is a language with which naturalism is familiar. Its followers call it "criticism." The Church entitles it, "rash judgment." But who can describe the determined spite, and persevering hatred, which naturalism fosters! Who can tell how it disdains the poor! The ninety-third canon of

the fourth council of Carthage says, that "the oblations and alms of brethren who are animated with passion against each other cannot be received by ecclesiastics, or placed in the trunk of the Church;" and the ninety-fourth canon says, that "bishops are to reject the gifts of those who oppress the poor." If naturalism alone were to make offerings, the Church, while such discipline lasted, would not wax very rich; but can a system of morality not only compatible, but almost always practically combined with such qualities and actions as render even the alms of men unacceptable, be opposed with any success, in

creatures, emanating from the Catholic Church?

Naturalism, in regard to its contempt for men, verifies the observation of a great author. "A portrait," he says, "when the person whom it represents, and the artist who painted it, are unknown, has no value. This is what happens to man when it is forgotten that he is the image of God, and formed by God. He becomes contemptible; he becomes matter, to be worked by brutal force; and, in effect, traverse the earth. Every where, when it is unknown that man is the image of the trinity of God, there is ignorance of man, contempt for man, oppres-

presence of virtue, to the supernatural love of our fellow-

sion of man."

Observe, again, its undutifulness and disobedience. Catholicism pronounces it better to be conquered and to conquer, than to conquer and be conquered\*. Naturalism directs the first education of children against such sentiments. "It does all for pride," as the Count de Maistre says, "and nothing for virtue; it presents morality as a thesis, and not as a code; it despises the ancient simplicity and the religious education. What are the consequences? You see them on all sides †."

Naturalism finds many things impossible, and one of them is the previous submission which moral victories require. "J'ai en moi," says a celebrated author, "une impossibilité d'obéir." We observed just now that the same was affirmed even of a late English philosopher. An opponent of the supernatural standard cannot bear the bridle without covering it with

bloody foam,

---- χαλινον δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται φέρειν, πρὶν αἰματηρον ἐξαφρίζεσθαι μένος ‡.

<sup>\*</sup> S. Steph. Grandim. lib. Sententiar. c, 34.

<sup>+</sup> Lettres, ii. p. 43.

Law and government, and the care of their reputation, will, of course, constrain such men in part. They try, however, to forget the fact; saying they obey because the laws are just, and the government is their own creation; or they obey, but like the demon, exclamans. Don Antonio de Guevara is struck with horror at a kind of existence which, where supernatural notions are wholly exploded, is deemed the only form sensible or tolerable. "Oh, how vain," he exclaims, "is the life of those who have no memory either of God to serve Him, or of his glory to obey Him, or of men to benefit them, or of life to amend it, or of conscience to purify it \*!" " The first and chief thing," says Marina de Escobar, "which can hinder the love of God, and consequently the love of all that emanates from Him in the sphere of morals,—that which is the root and fountain, as it were, whence proceed all the rest,-is the oblivion of God, as when a man, as it were, proscribes the Divine Majesty from his heart. This is the great evil of the soul: for as its greatest good is the memory and presence of God, which bring light and facility in all good works, so the oblivion of Him draws with it mighty evils, darkness, obscurity, deception, blindness, weariness of holy things, and all other evils as from their root and source †." To embrace naturalism is, in the language of St. Gertrude, "in regione dissimilitudinis distare à Deo t." God by his grace wishes to participate in human poverty and misery; but, as St. Stephen of Grandmont adds, "man is so proud and disdainful that he does not wish to partake in his riches and glory \( \). " Since the devil is a liar and the father of lies, he does not wish," says Ægidius Gabrielis, "to seem openly absurd or irrational; therefore he tries to prove inordinate to be ordinate love by plausible principles. He owns that God is to be loved above all; but as he thinks this difficult in the state of corrupt nature, he says this to be understood as keeping the commandments, and so eludes the 'Diliges dominum Deum tuum et toto corde tuo ||." He says,-" generally, that no irreverences and blasphemies against God are mortal sins, because they are pronounced without the intention or affection of blasphemy, and that men are used to hear them. Et sic Diabolus totam eludit Religionem per suas benignas, id est, humanæ corruptioni accommodatas, interpretationes ¶." "Inordinate love," concludes this author, "pronounces it to be quite sufficient to love God as the thief loves the judge that saves him from the gallows." As for the great practical doctrines respecting the

<sup>\*</sup> L'Horloge des Princes.

<sup>‡</sup> Insin. Div. Pietat. seu Vita ejus, lib. i.

<sup>§</sup> S. Steph. Grand. lib. Sent. c. 17.

Id. Specimina Moralis Diabolicae, § 4.

<sup>+</sup> P. lib. v. 29.

<sup>¶</sup> Id. v.

perpetual presence of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Church, the extension of his passion in the sufferings of its persecuted members, and the identification of their cause with his cause, the demi-pagan disciple of this school seems incapable of comprehending them. He explains them by speaking of the extravagance of persons belonging to all sects when fancying that they endure religious grievances; and he feels free to confess that expressions of this kind somehow always affect him with a sense of the ridiculous. In vain you may remind him of facts and texts. He resembles the squire described by Cervantes, who pretends that he delivered the letter to Dulcinea; were he to confess the truth, "lest he should be questioned, he forgot it on purpose." His opinions are no less in opposition with all the other mystical doctrines contained in the Holy Scriptures. We saw on another road, what he thinks of the diabolic influence. He is ever ready to say with the Harpax of Massinger.

> "I'll tell you what now of the devil. He's no such horrid creature; cloven-footed, Black, saucer-eyed, his nostrils breathing fire, As these lying Christians make him. He's more loving to man than man to man is."

Naturalism, proceeding thus farther still, finds its most congenial ally at last to be that infidelity, which, if not with open avowals, exercises its hatred of God, as St. Augustin says, "verbis animæ et clamore cogitationis \*." The secret thought has long been that of the Spungius of Massinger,-" I see no remedy, companion, but that thou and I must be half Pagans and half Christians; I am resolved to have an infidel's heart, though in show I carry a Christian's face." In fact, the opposition to the supernatural morality of the Catholic Church, proceeding through various stages, and assuming a diversity of forms, ends in a general disbelief of all that is godly or intelligible as such. And then its confessions, like those of Cardenes, disclose the consequences as affecting its views of the human nature; for it goes on to say,-

> " Certain we have no reason, nor that soul Created of that pureness books persuade us: We understand not, sure, nor feel that sweetness That men call virtue's chain to link our actions. Our imperfections form, and flatter us."

Christians like these the Æthiop shall condemn. Or, as the old dramatist says, " Nature did make the Heathen far more Christian than knowledge these less heathenish Christian\*." That they should malign the supernatural element ought to be only a motive for others, however imperfect, to love and to respect it more.

—— "And if our watchfulness
Ought to be wise and serious 'gainst a fhief
That comes to steal our goods, things all without us
That prove vexation often more than comfort,
How mighty ought our providence to be
To prevent those, of which these are chief,
That come to rob our bosom of our joys,
That only make poor man delight to live!"

To do this, maligning what is supernatural, seems to be their ruling passion,—pursuing it in every form, descending to the practices of the indivisible and democratic republic in its second year, or to the regulations of the Board of National Education in its maturity; when, in order to extirpate "fanaticism" under each system alike, official visitors are charged to order the removal of all Catholic symbols, crosses, holy pictures, et tous les autres signes de fanatisme, or, as elsewhere it is translated, "all other party badges." The results are seen in generations which, losing all faith in any distinctive Christianity, find amusement in sacrilegious platitudes, worthy of an atheist without taste, or of a laquais without religion. Our old dramatist holds up to ridicule their language, in the reply of the servant to the Venetian gentleman, who asks what is his religion:

"Troth, to answer truly
I would not be of one that should command me
To feed upon poor John, when I see pheasants
And partridges on table.

— I would not be confined
To my belief; when all your sects and sectaries
Are grown of one opinion, if I like it
I will profess myself;—in the mean time,
Live I in England, Spain, France, Rome, Geneva,
I'm of that country's faith. Come, laugh with me."

It is the same laugh as that Cleanthes brought his father's corpse to the grave with: he laughed thus then. Ives de Chartres contrasts the fall of St. Peter with the incredulity of such opponents. "Peter," he says, "did not deny that Christ was the Christ, but only that he himself was the disciple of Christ†." Whereas these men say we are his disciples, while leading us to infer practically that He is not God. They resemble, in regard

to their appreciation of the Church, the friend of Job, who, as St. Odo of Cluny observes, "was proudly silent; for when it is said that Helin waited for Job to speak, it is clear that he kept silence through respect, not for him, but for his friends; for the arrogant placed within despise the holy Church which they defend, and generally show much more reverence for the genius of those thinking wrongly than for the simple life of the innocent \*." "The inconsistency," says Leibnitz, "between men's lives and their professions, arises in part from this fact, that they are often only half convinced; and that, whatever they may say, an occult incredulity reigns with them at the bottom; for they have never understood the good reasons which verify the immortality of the soul, or they forget having understood them †." With Adam the formulas of this opposition were,-

> " Perhaps thou shalt not die; perhaps the fact Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first Made common and unhallow'd."-

With the moderns, naturalism holds other language, and says,— "perhaps thou shalt die, and death prove the extreme limit." And now look back, and mark what a contrast is here to those who used to commit their desires to the imitation of the weak, their actions to the censures of the wise and holy, and their frailties to the pardon of their God; for Catholicism sees its children fall through human weakness, but never turn on the Providence which they offend. Their wit will never serve them to so fond a purpose. "Because opportunity and sin persuaded us," says Cleantha, in the Queen of Arragon, " must we deform our minds?"

> "Cause you find yourself Nought but loose flesh, will you turn heretick And thence deny the soul ?"

This language falls powerless on those whom naturalism sways. We are all tainted some way, but these worst. "Yes," they answer in their hearts: "this is what we may do. Why should we not do it?" With such views, pietas ad omnia inutilis est: and only the spirit of Ganelon is useful. For Ganelon, who was a witness of Charlemagne's generous action, when he pardoned the duke d'Aigremont, looked upon this pardon as an act of weakness, which brought dishonour on his own family; and similarly he would have viewed every other action be-

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<sup>\*</sup> Mor. in Job, lib. xxiii.

<sup>+</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement, &c. ii.

longing to the supernatural order. But they who hold opinions of this kind must be prepared to see rise, high passions, anger, hate, mistrust, suspicion, discord. If they will impart such wisdom they will make man that wretched creature which he was.

"You then again shall see him passionate,
A lover of poor trifles, confident
In man's deceiving strength, or false fortune;
Jealous, revengeful, in unjust things daring,
Injurious, quarrelsome, stored with all diseases
The beastly part of man infects his soul with."

The decline of supernatural morals is indicative of that drooping host which Dante speaks of in the lines,

> ------ "Slow, and full of doubt And with thin ranks, after its banners mov'd The army of Christ\*."

"Protestantism," says Frederick Schlegel, "has not been confined to those states where it became predominant, and received a public and legal establishment. Far greater was the danger, far more fatal were the consequences, when an open rupture, a formal separation from the Church, did not take place, but where the spirit of Protestantism, a like or a kindred set of opinions, was infused into the moral system when the state or individual was externally Catholic." So Europe has remarked a prime minister of England approving of the projects of atheists in Piedmont, of Josephists in Austria, of Voltaireans in Belgium, of Jansenists in Portugal, of Gallicans in France, and of Cisalpines in England, and declaring that he would desire to carry them out with a view to the interests of the Catholic laity, as recognized and understood by themselves.

The inconsistency caused by the attempt of some generations, generally adopting natural views, to continue professing the theory of supernatural morals, as in certain cases the old established legislation compels them to do, gives rise to a sense of the ridiculous, which modern authors are not reluctant to express, as, in fact, it constitutes for their genius of satire an inexhaustible supply of food. Goethe, who saw the coronation of Joseph II. as king of the Romans, describes him with the 'ewelled crown of Charlemagne, dragging himself along as if in disguise, so that he himself, looking at his father from time to time, could not refrain from laughing. Such men and generations, however willing to keep within the bounds that their own interest, as they understand it, prescribes, are, in fact,

ready in a moment for any revolt, though it were to atheism itself. It must be some angel that will pluck them from the apostasy they are falling to, and by a miracle lend them a weapon to underprop falling honour. They are found at the present day seeking to intimidate the Catholic Church by arguments which St. Chrysostom had to answer. "But you will say," he observes, "that there are many sects and heresies; and if you press them, they will renounce the Catholic faith, and will become heretics. This is a cold vain objection. I have learned from Scripture that a man who does the will of the Lord is worth more than ten thousand of the wicked; and I appeal to yourselves-which would you rather have, one good or a thousand evil servants? Let him who desires to leave the Church and join the heretics, do what he pleases. It is to corrupt, to destroy all things, to say, 'spare him for fear lest he should leave the Communion of the Church and embrace heresy; he is weak, condescend to his weakness \*." When the diet of Sweden required, that before setting his foot in the kingdom, Oscar, son of Bernadotte, whom they were about to elect for king, should abjure the Catholic religion and embrace Lutheranism, the French ambassador said,—"qu'il ne croyait pas que la chose souffrit de difficultés." Such is the indifference of naturalism for truth. What it loves best is that system in which the moral chemist, like De Maistre, can detect the presence of all error; in which there is a Protestant element, minute if you will, but incontestable; for, as he says, "the monster was born from it; a Jansenist element, mixed with the other by way of affinity; a parliamentary element, rendered very destructive by sublimation; and, in fine, a philosophic element which need not probably be described †." In the Declaration of the Convention, signed in Paris in 1815, he detects a spirit which is neither Catholic, nor Greek, nor Protestant. "It is a particular spirit," he says, "which I have been thirty years studying. It is as good in the separated sects as it is bad when among ourselves. It is that which is to melt the metals ‡." If in this instance it had spoken clear, it would have said, -" These princes declare that all Christians form only one family professing the same religion, and that the different denominations which distinguish them signify nothing \( \delta \)." "But it is a contradiction in terms, to maintain that there are only sects in the world; and when men say all Christian sects, they know not what they say if they do not suppose a body anterior to them from which they have been detached." In fine, the combined force of moral imperfection, tepidity, dissipation, selfishness, falsehood, policy, worldliness,

<sup>\*</sup> In Epist. ad Col. c. 2.

<sup>‡</sup> i, 69,

<sup>†</sup> Lettres, i. 62. § i. 84.

avarice, licentiousness, injustice, uncharitableness, disobedience, impiety, and incredulity, finds an issue through which it can express and exercise at once the whole of its intensity without compromising, it is hoped, any of the temporal interests which those who exercise it regard; and this issue is formed by directing all the hatred resulting from these qualities, against that supernatural or heroic element which involves the views and morals of the Catholic Church: and as it would be absurd to heed a judgment derived from any of these evil dispositions separately existing, so it may be concluded now that their combined testimony is equally worthless; or rather, that the last form which naturalism assumes, constituting this opposition specifically directed against the supernatural or heroic element of Catholicism, is itself incapable of creating an impediment to virtuous men who are advancing towards a recognition of its truth. In the first place, aversion to the supernatural and heroic morals, involving tepidity or indifference in regard to religion, constitutes of itself a character that sooner or later becomes odious or contemptible to mankind. "I wish to tell you a great truth," says the Count de Maistre, "l'irréligion est canaille." Impiety confers on some persons the extraordinary privilege of being able to excite at the same time pity and indignation. Here we have only to keep aloof; for, as Guzman says in the old tragedy, "there is no valour in tugging with a man-fiend: in arguing with one who abjures all goodness, grows at hate with prayer, and studies curses, imprecations, blasphemous speeches, oaths, detested oaths, or any thing that's ill." There are men as well as trees of good odour. It is a remarkable fact, that Catholics supernaturally and heroically impressed, fervent persons, whether young or old, men or women, lay persons or priests, holy monks and nuns, pontiffs banished for their faith, men calumniated, stigmatized for their heroic supernatural virtue, men robbed, sentenced judicially, outlawed, as barefooted friars and Jesuits, coming by some accident to be personally known, are loved, admired, and respected even by men opposed by circumstances to their faith; whereas lukewarm, worldly, accommodating Catholics, Cisalpines, and by whatever other name they may be distinguished, when equally well known, are disliked, and often scorned by those whose favour they seem to court. The stranger here can speak from experience; for in a conversation which he had once with an English sceptic, this distinguished writer remarked, that one of the worst men he ever knew was a Catholic-naming the individual. The judgment may have been utterly rash and baseless; but it was replied to him, that this ecclesiastic appeared to be as jealous of the Holy See as he was himself; and that he had written on one point of Catholic history as suspiciously, disdainfully, and calumniously, as any open foe to Catholicism could have written. Another instance occurred still more recently: " I verily believe," said an aged and illustrious lady, conversing with the same witness, "that what prevented my embracing the Catholic faith when I was very young, was my hearing on one occasion, a certain English priest"-naming him-" sneer generally at the saints, and ridicule me for admiring the custom of having their pictures in Catholic houses." The reply to her was similar to the former. She was told that this ecclesiastic, though a learned man, had been suspended by his bishop for writings contrary to faith. Both, in fact, had adopted natural views; both were of the compromising school; both members of the Cisalpine club; both supremely jealous of the Holy See, and, indeed, of every thing called holy, which, whatever might be its form, they considered a badge of "Ultramontanism." Catholicism is a climate warmed by charity, and when that heat fails, the effects present an analogy to a forest phenomenon: for it is not without example for trees whose native soil is that of cold savage mountains, and which may have even come originally from the icy zone, to succumb to the cold which sometimes is experienced in temperate or warm climates. The cold of indifference within the Church is more pernicious than the state of the moral atmosphere without the limit of its pale. In fact, than such Catholics, no men are more hardened. It is they who on each occasion when faith and honour are at stake, "utter their opinion with one of those grinning sneers with which the devil marks his best beloved." One who had spent some years with the Saracens, on his return to Florence, hearing preach brother Albert de Sartiano, wept, and replied to those who asked the cause, "I weep for the calamity of the Moors and the ingratitude of the Christians; for if this sermon were preached in Damascus, I believe more than eighty thousand souls would be converted \*." It is persons of this class who occasion all that is really calamitous in Christian history, as in present times. Hear Savonarola:- "Posuisti nos in contradictionem vicinis nostris. Who are our neighbours but the tepid, who in externals seem to be Christians? Alas! the enemies would not scorn unless these had contradicted. The enemies would be converted to penitence unless the tepid hindered them. The enemies would become friends and defenders of the truth if the Church had not tepid contradictors. Inimici converterentur ad pœnitentiam nisi tepidi eos impedirent. Inimici denique fierent amici et veritatis defensores, nisi Ecclesia haberet tepidos contradictores †."

<sup>\*</sup> Begerlinck, Apophtheg. Christian. + In Ps. Qui reg. Is.

This hostility to the supernatural element betrays its evil and its error, again, by the inconsistency into which it leads all men who contract it, while continuing to profess themselves Christians. No one denies that there may be an inconsistency, in matters of taste, and even of philosophy, compatible with faith and virtue. Of the latter, perhaps, most instances occur in these later times; but with the former the early ages of Christianity were not unacquainted; for the first Christians sometimes borrowed the pagan style in their mortuary inscriptions, as when they prefaced them with a dedication,—'diis manibus.' Thus epitaphs of the following kind are found,—

"D. Ma. Sacrum XL.
Leopardum in pacem. cum
Spirita sancta acceptum
Eumte, Abeatis. innocintem.
Posuer. Par. 9. an. n. vii. men. vii \*."

No doubt a benign interpretation is often the wisest, when in later times analogous incongruities occur in books of philosophy; but still there are instances that would justify the severest conclusion; for, not to remark that inconsistency in what appears minute matters may have ultimate consequences of great practical moment, not to insist on the observation of the Count de Maistre, that "there is nothing so dangerous as good bad books, that is to say, bad books written by good men, blinded by some error †," the inconsistency to be noticed here is far more often an index that cannot be mistaken, of some wilful and radical prevarication; for naturalism occasions a practical contradiction that cannot, for a moment, be reconciled with any state but that of a virtual apostasy. "Si veritatem dico vobis," says the Highest Voice, "quare non creditis me?" "It is a rule with doctors and masters," adds St. Anthony of Padua, citing the passage that "each person is to be believed in matters of his own science, but, alas! here is an exception. believe Priscian in matters of grammar, Aristotle on logic and syllogisms, and so with others. Alone to Christ belief is refused. Christians alone disdain to believe the Author of their They believe the world; they believe the demon; they believe the flesh; they believe sin; but truth they will not

We see proof, in fact, that as with the accomplices of Cylon, the thread which connected the disciples of naturalism with the temple is broken. "Suffer me to speak here," says a learned Jesuit, "we all boast of faith. Alas! many want it. You say

<sup>\*</sup> Mabill. Iter Italicum, 71. + Lettres, i. 62. ‡ Serm. Dom. in Passione.

I am a Christian, a Catholic. I am of the confraternity of the blessed Virgin, and what not? I will defend the Catholic faith to my last breath. Well, this is bravely said, if only you speak from your mind. But let us examine the faith of the man. He is tenacious of money. We say to him, 'give this florin, or Philippeus, to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Watch now his countenance. How he contracts it! He shakes his head. 'A sparrow in the hand,' he replies, 'is better than an eagle on the roof. Lo, what languid faith! But again. The good man has rivals, who injure him. You exhort him to forgive. No, he would rather die first. Lo, his faith is dead, cadaverous \*."

And, accordingly, witness what ensues. "These men," says St. Bridget in her revelations, "instead of avoiding the conversation and society of those personally excommunicated, are joined with them in familiar intimacy,—eis aliqua amicabilitate conjuncti sunt †." And what is seen on the other side of the medal? A deep-rooted and implacable hatred of the Church. Herodotus, in relating the battle of Platæa, says that "the Beeotians, after making alliance with Xerxes, fought against the confederate Greeks with as much hatred as the barbarians themselves. So do characters of this class join their forces against Rome. Truly moderation is a proof of wisdom, and an index that marks a great advance in Catholic perfection, which, consisting in charity, can never be reconciled with the exaggerated views and language of violent and boisterous zealots; but these men set down every thing essential to the religion which they profess, as arguing what they term Ultramontane opinions, stigmatizing them, perhaps, in Parliament, as being incompatible with loyalty and obedience to the government of the State. The eloquence of such orators, where Catholic interests are concerned, is not a quiet, gentle thing, which rejoices in probity and modesty. To use the words of Tacitus, it is "alumna licentiæ, quam stulti libertatem vocabant, comes seditionum, effrenati populi incitamentum, contumax, temeraria, adrogans, quæ in bene constitutis civitatibus non oritur." From every thing belonging to faith, however noble, generous, and natural, their minds are more or less alienated: the prerogatives of the Holy See confirmed by the language and custom of all ages, which the popular voice of no nation, if not misled by sophists, would ever oppose, the existence of the religious orders to receive those who personally need them, and which interfere with no one who does not need them, confession, which the human instincts recognize, abstinence, which tends to reconcile with justice the unequal distribution of fortune, the invocation

<sup>\*</sup> Drex. Rosæ Select. Virt. P. i. c. 4.

of the saints, without which men cannot so much as explain the titles still attached to every ancient Church, the need of a religious education for youth, without which Catholics grow up worse than the avowed enemies of their faith, worse than open infidels, having interest for honour, and atheism for charity-of which it was supposed they were to be mirrors,-all these things become, in their judgment, the result of Ultramontane opinions, inconsistent with liberality, with the progress of the age in wisdom, perhaps, also, with the constitution of their country. But what need of eloquence, even in the senate, to show the turpitude of their own inconsistency? "Quid onus est longis in senatu sententiis cum optimi cito consentiant?" The result is often the consequence of inconsistency, even in regard to their education from boyhood; for, as the Roman historian says of the schools of the rhetoricians, "deducuntur in scholas, quibus non facile dixerim utrumne locus ipse an condiscipuli an genus studiorum plus mali ingeniis adferant-nam in loco nihil reverentiæ; -- ipsæ vero exercitationes magna ex parte contrariæ."

Men, as if like trees, without power of discrimination, take whatever intellectual food comes in their way. The spongioles at the extremity of the fibres of the roots of trees, have no chemical or mechanical means of rejecting any liquid which flows within their reach, but suck up all indiscriminately; but as, in the ordinary course of nature, no injurious liquids are presented to them, a discriminating power would seldom have availed them. To man, injurious poisons are every where offered, and naturalism, leading him off his guard, teaching him to neglect the powers with which he has been endowed, induces

him to imbibe all with equal indifference.

Will it be allowable to add to such grave considerations, a motive drawn from the interests that seem more immediately to effect only the esthetic side of things? Will it be allowable to suggest that it is this opposition to the supernatural element of Catholicity, which renders life at present so monotonous, so unpoetical, so anti-historical, which, after all, leads imperceptibly but surely to its being, so profane?

Some German pilgrims in Italy, with whom Goethe happened one day to join company, complained in answer to his inquiries that no one in that country would believe in their piety,—

"Ye may see by my signs
That sitten on mine hat
That I have walked full wide
In weet and dry,
And sought good saints
For my soul's health."

THE ROAD OF THE SAVAGE MAN.

Nevertheless, they said that they were treated by many as vagrants in almost every Catholic country, though they produced the route which had been clerically prescribed, and the passports given by the bishop. On the other hand, they described with gratitude how well they had been received by some Protestants, for whom they said they intended to pray daily that God might open their eyes, and take them into the Catholic Church, so that they might hope to meet them in Paradise hereafter. These pilgrims' complaints, perhaps, have been exaggerated by the narrator; for it is seldom that such men give an exact account of what, belonging to this order of things, has fallen in their way; but the instance may serve to verify the observation, that naturalism produces, within the Church, results in this respect like the sea wind upon trees which present, when exposed to it, a hideous aspect, and which are not calculated to please minds susceptible of the charm with which Catholicity, by its devotions, can invest the ways of ordinary life.

Naturalism, though as old as the world, has always the character of a novelty, of a new barbarism. It knows nothing of history, and its cravings are all opposed to every historical memory endeared to the affections of a man of ordinary information. In our times, it even boasts of its condition in this respect, and advocates a systematic revolt from antiquity. books of politics," it says, "are to be rewritten; all books on morals, hitherto mixed up with mysticism, are to be rewritten; all books of history are to be rewritten \*." Addressing a great people, the Count de Maistre exhorts them to "be on their guard against the perils of succumbing to this spirit. Follow," he says, "ancient examples; contradict this thirst for novelty, even in the minutest details. Leave hanging on your walls the faded tapestry of your ancestors. Let your tables groan beneath their massive plate. Let the sophism of insensibility that would say, 'sell the house because your father died in it,' be anathema in your ears. Place not in plaster, but in bronze, your arms on the portal, and let the tenth generation tread the same threshold that has seen pass the funeral of its fathers." Alas! in spite of all that eloquence, and genius, and patriotism can utter, the success of the innovators is frequently but too certain, and the Church in this respect has to experience, in some places, the same results which are predicted in times of social convulsions to the palace. "The peasant who has just purchased your castle," says the Count de Maistre, writing to a certain marchioness immediately after the great revolution of France, makes himself of course, at the first, ridiculous; but wait till he

<sup>\*</sup> Décade Philosophique, 1798.

has placed his little cyphers on the portal in the place of your heraldic besants and martlets; wait till he has been seen repeatedly going in and out, till his wife, his daughters, his aunt and his cousins, have learned to walk courageously on your floors, and till the shadows of your ancestors, disturbed by the noises of some manufacture, have at last totally deserted these towers; and then, madame, it is you who will be ridiculous, if you should maintain that the new proprietor is a robber. Every one will say, 'what a paradox!'" But the triumph of naturalism only renders more intense the disgust with which its pretensions inflame the noble soul.

Another significant characteristic of this hatred which naturalism evinces against the supernatural banner, is its systematic indifference and opposition to heroic virtue. In this respect, its consequences were, perhaps, never more apparent than now. "L'honneur est un vieux saint que l'on ne chôme plus." It is the Count de Maistre who makes this remark. In fact, as he says elsewhere, "the desolating spectacle of triumphant crime which our age has beheld on every scale, has destroyed, in a great part, all morality, and diffused through souls a mortal indifference for all that is great, noble, and elevated. There is a spirit of detraction which refuses to admire, and which even blames what other men admire. This spirit is everywhere." He alludes to an instance even among his own acquaintances. "My steel," he says, "has struck this flint in every sense. Never have I been able to elicit a spark." Now, this attribute of naturalism supplies a great signal. For Catholicism imparts. in the highest possible degree, the power of admiration and of sympathy. "When traits of heroic goodness are related," says this illustrious author, who so well represents its spirit, "one should be silent; for there is no possibility of praising them enough." Nations, even like individuals, are prone to admire in proportion as they are superior. Mediocrity refuses always to admire, and often even to approve. How odious and pernicious is such influence! After giving the letter of the young Eugène de Costa, in which, a few days before his death, he describes his being wounded, the Count adds this comment, "I should greatly pity the man who would not feel the beauty of this simple letter." Alas! there is often need for such compassion. "What! can you think of writers, from whom the greatest names, and the most memorable and interesting events of the earth cannot elicit a single line, which is not either a crime or an absurdity? Who not only do not know how to admire, but who calumniate, outrage, falsify, misrepresent the noblest things. Do you wish to ascertain the presence of a great character? Relate a great action. Instantly he is inflamed, and he extols it to the skies. The contrary effect will

unveil the vill

unveil the villain. Cite before him whatever has been witnessed most sublime in the universe, from the sacrifice of Abraham to the battle of Thermopylæ, and from the self-devotion of Decius to the immolation of Louis XVI., his first movement will be to lower it. Nothing is more natural. The one exalts what belongs to its own greatness, the other depreciates what is foreign to himself." Naturalism freezes every thing in this order of virtue; it diminishes the moral dimensions of man. "Resuscitate in your hearts," says this great author, addressing his fellow-countrymen in 1793, "the enthusiasm of ancient honour, ancient loyalty, and that Divine flame which makes heroic men." It is as if he said, "return to the ancient faith, which supplies all."

In fine, the extent to which naturalism prevails at certain epochs significative of its adaptation to a society not characterized by respect for what is Divine, may awaken some wayfarers to a sense of the necessity of escaping, by an heroic effort, from its influence. It may require a struggle then to avoid the smooth descent prepared for all unguarded feet; but noble virtue will

disdain it, saying, with the poet,

To falsify a faith; and ever after Disrobed of that fair ornament, live naked, A scorn to time and truth."

Naturalism has always a tendency to return and supplant the Catholic civilization; so that it is with countries in respect to their moral as well as to their physical history. What was once cultivated may again grow wild, and that, too, in consequence of the will of their inhabitants. In many parts of Germany, especially in Franconia, one finds in the depth of forests evident traces of lands formerly in cultivation, where now grow aged oaks. It is certain that even in ancient times, the reproduction of whole forests by planting certain districts, for which the term was "afforestare boscum," has been the object even of some governments. The fact is attested by a forest edict of the emperor Henry VII., and by the forest of Nuremberg itself, which was replanted in 1309. So in the moral world, what was once disforested, deafforestatus, or reclaimed, not only lapses into wildness by the force of natural vegetation, but returns to it by the will and decree of States. Then is the time for individuals to act with a view to their own safety, and without waiting for any general deliverance, which may never come; for, in reference to this naturalism, we may say with the Count de Maistre, that " all the world cannot be united to combat the

enemy of all the world, who has his recruits in all the world \*." "Health is not contagious," as he remarks, "it is disease which often is imparted by contact or neighbourhood." Naturalism. more or less, will necessarily be found every where; and the men who represent it must be met with even within the Church. "It is the rule," says Ives de Chartres, "quia communio malorum neminem maculat, sed consensio factorum." St. Augustin thus speaks:- "Perchance, among the people of God there stands near you an avaricious or covetous man, a plunderer, whom you know to be such, and he is one of the faithful, or called so. You cannot expel him from the Church. You have no hold of him. He approaches the altar along with you. Fear not. Each one will bear his own burden. Is it not better that you should bear him within than that you should put yourself without the Church? You will not communicate with him in avarice, but you will communicate with him at the table of Christ; and what injury will accrue to you from that? When, therefore, the contagion of sinning invades the multitude, the severe mercy of Divine discipline is necessary; for the counsels of separation are vain, and pernicious, and sacrilegious, because they are impious and proud, and they more disturb the weak good than they correct the audacious bad. Therefore from these words of St. Augustin," concludes Ives de Chartres, "we have only to avoid such as are personally excommunicated †." St. Augustin says:-" Discipline can be enforced when the multitude of the congregation of the Church is free from the crime which is to be anathematized. For correction cannot be wholesome unless when he who is corrected has not the multitude for associates; but when the same disease infects many, nothing else remains for the good but grief, that by that sign which was revealed to holy Ezechiel they may escape from partaking in their punishment†."

It seems as if there were epochs in morals as well as in the seasons, and as if all times were not equally favourable to men's spiritual and heroic growth, but that it is with them as with trees and vegetation, which are affected by their vicissitudes. The cedars of Lebanon, once so numerous, were reduced in the year 1574 to twenty-six in number, without any young trees appearing to replace them. Since then we are told that only sixteen can be discovered; which fact surprises naturalists, when they consider that the same cedars planted in England, multiply without requiring any care. Races of trees become scarce in some countries, as if to teach us not to trust to the continuance of any thing beau-

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres, &c. i. 30.

<sup>+</sup> Ep. 186.

<sup>#</sup> Lib. iii. c. 2, cont. Parmen. Epist. 236.

tiful or good on earth. The chesnut, which once covered vast districts in France, has nearly disappeared there. Like the noblest sons of the forest, Christians supernaturally and heroically impressed, once so numerous in some countries, which were not the less naturally delightful for that reason, are found thus to disappear where the locality seems most congenial. There have been epochs, it is true, as horrible for men as the winter of 1789 proved for the trees, which may account in part for the subsequent diminution of virtues as of truths. Besides, in consequence of the liberty of man, it seems as if the world had been divided by him into zones, beyond which the supernatural and heroic virtues of Catholicism are found only creeping in as if by stealth at rare intervals, and existing merely in an exceptional manner. Looking back to what has passed in the North for the last three hundred years, there would be no absurdity in proposing such an explanation to account for the fact. Philosophers say that the loss of central heat within historic periods has hardly been appreciable by our instruments. Be this as it may, the action of naturalism within the moral sphere can be traced without difficulty. The cold influence appears, too, in the estimation of some persons, to be extending. Is it, they ask in moments of discouragement, that as the stars of the Southern cross are receding more and more from our latitudes, so the cross of which it is the wondrous symbol is approaching our horizon? Naturalism is a plant that grows, it is true, in every zone; but there is this difference between its powers of propagation and those of the production opposed to it, that the latter will in general totally disappear and recede with the sun of the Church, which brings into being what is supernatural. Forests present an analogy to this difference in the moral climates; for cypresses, pines, oaks, berberries, and aldars, like those of Europe, cover the mountains and elevated plains of Southern Mexico, whereas in the frigid North, in the midst of the barren heath, the solitary student can only mentally enjoy the spectacle of nature in all its forms. In Italy and Spain you have, as late and present events demonstrate, the naturalism of the North; but in the colder zones, where Protestantism has long prevailed, you have not every where along with it the supernatural fruit of more favoured regions.

"Strange thing it is an errant knight to see
Here in this place; or any other wight,
That hether turns his steps; so few there bee
That chose the narrow path or seeke the right!
All keep the broad high way, and take delight
With many rather for to goe astray,
And be partakers of their evill plight,
Then with a few to walk the rightest way:
O! foolish men, why hast ye to your own decay?"

Theophrastus speaks of certain trees, which, when planted in the paradises round Babylon, were found not to live \*. general, we know that trees are soon affected by an uncongenial soil. If the common larch be planted above red sandstone, the outward decay of the tree is visible at from fifteen to twenty-five years of age, the internal decay commencing sooner. Foresters remark also, that those kinds of trees which are rare in a country, are more subject to injury from the teeth of animals than those which have existed in it long in profusion. How hard is it found to rear the plants of true Catholic heroic virtue in certain localities! and when they do shoot up, to what destructive teeth are they exposed! On the other hand, even where they grow for any length of time, one might say that they are often, to a certain extent, modified by the character of the locality. Delamarre remarked, that the wood of the Scotch fir was sometimes white and at others red; and Mr. Reid, of Aberdeen, wrote to inform him that this difference was occasioned by the nature of the soil,—that the reddish fir grew on rich loam, and the white on ground of another kind +. Men's religion and virtue seem sometimes to be thus coloured by their national temperament. The odour of some plants is said to vary according to the climates in which they are found: Εὐοσμία παρά τοὺς τόπους. So it is with moral graces. In some places the perfume fades, the plant itself seems to degenerate: it is no longer the same thing as elsewhere one has known it. Foresters tell us that the birch tree cannot well bear to be transplanted, and that if its roots are in the least injured the tree will never grow again. Some of those who profess to cultivate the supernatural and heroic virtues of Catholicism in countries little favourable to them, while severing their fibres from the congenial soil, in compliance with what they fancy is wished by the multitude around them, will find their experience similar. Those few isolated characters, growing hard, distorted, and excentric, where once a fervent population surrounded them, resemble the trees that are left standing alone where a wood has been cut down. It was thought at one time by some foresters, that these solitary trees formed the best timber, and that those grown in thick high woods were weak, soft, and only fit for household furniture; but Varenne-Fénille has shown the error of this opinion. Plinguet, who treated on the forests of Orleans and Montargis, declares, on the authority of Buffon, that the timber grown in woods is far preferable; for that the solitary standards become twisted and full of knots, which diminish by a fourth the strength of the timber. What is still more remarkable, too, in point of analogy, they are deemed by

the most skilful woodmen to be moreover the destruction of a rising copse, for instead of guarding the young slips from the

frost, they produce a contrary effect.

But we must not remain here tracing these forest analogies, however striking, and gazing, no unconcerned spectators, perhaps, on the effects of naturalism in the moral world. the multitude of the perverse, in the few that oppose Catholicity where it is dominant, and in some of those few who profess it, where as affecting the mass of the people it is dormant or cut down, the evil consequences can be observed by every one who passes, attesting the truth of those great voices affirming within the Church that it is faith and not reason which yields virtue; that more is necessary than a mere external bond of communion, without any practical or intellectual influence from the supernatural and heroic principles of Catholicity; that what is peculiar to Catholicism, and professedly supernatural, is precisely that which virtue of the truest and highest stamp, even in the judgment of nature, requires; and that what excludes that peculiarity, whether it be naturalism within or heresy without the Church, is insufficient for the wants of our nature, and even hostile to the moral interests of mankind. These to some persons may be ungenial views; but why should any one take offence, or espouse the cause of that naturalism, which is a thing so little attractive or beautiful, that Spenser's blattant beast might represent it, while the poet's hatred of it might be held up for the imitation of the virtuous?

"The blattant beast, quoth he, I doe pursew;
And through the world incessantly doe chase,
Till I him overtake, or else subdew:
It is a monster bred of hellish race,
—— which often hath annoyd
Good knights and ladies true, and many else destroyd.
Into this wicked world he forth was sent
To be the plague and scourge of wretched men;
When with vile tongue and venemous intent
He sore doth wound, and bite, and cruelly torment.
The which doth seeme a thousand tongues to have,
That all in spight and malice doe agree."

The conclusion leads to the centre, by impressing men with a conviction that there is need of great endurance to bear with others, as Catholicism requires them to do; and of great and heroic resolution to deliver themselves in equal accordance with what it lays down. Regarding the first obligation, "every thing admonishes us," says St. Augustin, "within that society of the Sacraments with which we are imbued to eternal life, cum his qui oderunt pacem esse debere pacificos, until our long pil-

grimage shall be at an end; and in the virtue of Jerusalem, our eternal mother, we shall enjoy securest peace, and in its towers the abundance of true brethren, of whom now amongst many false we deplore the paucity \*." And with respect to the latter, a lesson might be borrowed from the trees around us: for roots appear to have, by some means or other, a tendency given to them to go in search of food, even though it lead them into an unnatural situation or manner of growth. Thus if the superficial soil be poor, whilst the sub-soil be richly charged with nutritive particles, the growth of roots will be unusually rapid until they reach the stratum where plenty abounds, which they will be in no haste to leave, and vice versa. The roots of an ash have been known to traverse a deep ditch, by descending the first side as near to its surface as was possible without exposure upon it, and in like manner crossing the bottom just covered from the air, and ascending the opposite side, until they reached that depth from the surface which was natural to them, when they continued their growth horizontally. Virtue requires to have fed its roots; and if confounded with local obstacles, it should imitate the tree, in seeking thus unobtrusively, and without any seeming singularity, the fitting nutriment. It may be necessary secretly to mount and to descend, to traverse barriers that nature herself may seem to have imposed; but all is little for the object.

"What end should cause us take such paine,
But that same end, which every living wight
Should make his marke, high heaven to attaine?
Is not from hence the way that leadeth right
To that most glorious house that glistreth bright
With burning starres and everliving fire?"

Man from youth is of an innocent gloss, until some devil brings this colour of false nature to his mind, and teaches him "to change the livery of saints and angels for this mixt monstrousness; to force a ground that has been hallowed like a temple, to bring forth fruits of earth." Oh, look on this work, as the old poet says,—

"But with a Christian eye, 'twould turn thy heart Into a shower of blood, to be the cause Of such destruction; — think upon 't, Ruin eternally ——!"

Every consideration, both temporal and eternal, should move men thus to cast off henceforth far from their noblest nature that false and dangerous dependence upon nature, which ulti-

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mately resolves itself into the contempt of goodness, and ends with loss of Heaven.

But though this road has been so long followed, there are still remaining to be seen two avenues which lead from it to the Church; the first consisting in the devotions or religious practices of Catholicism, by which the supernatural and heroic virtue is generally supplied and animated; the second, in the delights with which it is allured and crowned.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE ROAD OF THE SOURCES AND REWARDS OF VIRTUE.



HE path to the pure springs that here invites us to take in draughts of life from the bright founts of heaven, need not be followed far, though it is necessary to proceed for a few steps along it to count them; for the devotions which are subservient and essential to Catholic virtue have been partly observed upon earlier

roads, and, besides, a hasty glance in passing will be sufficient for the present purpose. At this moment we enter into an air of blessedness; a moment more, and our feet are soft in flowers at the cool brink. There is store of joys upon this alp, though many reach not the bright summit.

"How like a silent stream, shaded with night, And gliding softly with our windy sighs, Moves the whole frame of this solemnity!"

Here are sights which can recall the lines of another poet:-

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard Are sweeter; therefore, — play on; Not to the sensual ear, but more endear'd Play to the spirit ditties of no tone."

Naturalism in one sense is very independent and free; it has no need of sacrifices or symbols, of priests or altars, of festivals or times of sacred exercise. These, it says, are superstitious nothings. All days and times of the year are its own, and of these vol. VI.

the several hours marked out and to what use. Give it what begins and ends with sordid earth, and nothing more it pronounces and endeavours to believe is wanting. But it is not so with virtues of the supernatural and heroic order in man. These require much that the profane world never values, and much that the Catholic Church alone is found willing and able to supply. First they require, as every one knows, what even the Pagans sought for,—intercourse with Heaven, a sense of the Divine presence. What becomes of virtue if left alone in the world, depending on the judgment of men; or if animated by no higher motive than a selfish regard to reputation or to profit? It requires a nobler associate than man, a more exalted end than his favour. Now it is a significant fact, that whenever this communication is wholly interrupted, all respect and love for Catholicity cease. The phenomenon can easily be accounted for; since whatever is peculiar to the Catholic religion has been instituted for the purpose of calling forth the spiritual and unworldly tendencies of our nature to the exclusion of the ambition and vanity of common life, and so, where this spiritual or heroic life ceases to be esteemed, the organs for its production will, as a necessary consequence, be thrown aside as worthless. Virtue, however, requires the assistance of such means; which are still the leaven that, spreading in this dull and clodded earth.

## "Gives it a touch ethereal;"

and faith, without exercise, expires. Some, indeed, are now lamenting aloud, that we lost, for two or three centuries, by the reform, the zealous spirit which turned such provisions to account; and no one need be told, that naturalism even turns with aversion from these first and fundamental devotions of the Catholic Church, representing them as inconsistent with the character that it most admires. But what can be more irrational as well as ungenerous, than this appreciation of things? The Catholic devotions gave a loftier tone to the mind of the most uninformed, than belongs to all that has been substituted for them. The solemn chants; the recurrence of festivals, commemorating the history or mysteries of religion; the practice of a constant reliance on the protection of the great Father of all, and the love of those who best loved Him—why should such exercises appear to any human eye superfluous?

"Think of me, and I will think of you," said the mystic voice to St. Catherine of Sienna; the sole reason of which precept being, as her biographer remarks, "to secure our being united to happiness in God, who is its source." Such is the first devotion of those who show forth in their lives the supernatural

and heroic virtue; and it is evident that this is nourished with tenderness in the Catholic Church, which makes provision in

every way for its exercise.

The second source, we are told, is prayer. And here again the misrepresentations of the profane ought to be cleared away; for if Catholic virtue require prayer, it employs not that of the Pharisee, not that which springs from the gloomy recesses of a proud heart, but that of the Publican, that of the Centurion, that of the sinner who loved much; and with this exercise is combined a shape of beauty that moves away the pall from all dark spirits. With this no age, or state, or occupation, or type of noble bravery, is incompatible. "Whether," says St. Ephrem, "you are in the church or in your own house, or in the fields, whether you are watching sheep or constructing an edifice, cease not from prayer, morning, noon, and evening. Prayer is the administration of the family, the right constitution of laws, the power of the kingdom, the fertility of lands, the

guardian of peace \*."

But we cannot sufficiently dwell upon the remark that all this intercourse with heaven differs totally from the proud meditations of philosophers, and from the practices and thoughts where Catholicism is unknown. There is belonging to every pious exercise of Catholics, a certain character of universality which renders it proper for all ages and conditions alike, for sinners and for saints equally. To wear on the person a token of desiring God's friendship and protection, to treat one's own body harshly, and refrain from pampering it; to use prayers like those of the angelus and rosary, which every one, young and old, simple and learned, can repeat without the least hypocritical pretence, without any rash promises to accomplish what is impossible, without letting escape from one's lips a word that is not in harmony with a sense of one's own frailty and sinfulness; to seek the prayers of others, the intercession of others, and to hope for future happiness on other ground besides that of personal respectability, founded on some idea of undeviating moral perfection; all this, however popular and ridiculous in the estimation of proud philosophers and prouder ministers, is highly suitable, and conformable to what the common condition of us all requires. The whole of this practised by the most holy saints, can be observed without creating any sense of incongruity by the lightest, humblest, and least self-conceited of the plebeian youth.

The angelus bell, and the daily celebration of mass, the popular devotions and the domestic oratory, the doctrine of intentions and the provision for mental recollection, proclaim that it

is Catholics who possess the devotions which recommend themselves to the human conscience. "The universal antness of a religious system for all stages of civilization, and for all sorts and conditions of men, well befits," says a traveller in the East, "its claim of Divine origin. She is, of all nations, and of all times, that wonderful Church of Rome \*." Protestants are often surprised on observing the fact, that Catholics never betray any shame at being found upon their knees, or practising any of the exercises of religion. But why should they? There is nothing unmanly or associated in their imagination with any thing hypocritical in what they do.

From "the most august and affecting ceremony which is known among men," as a great English living writer qualifies the rite of holv week at Rome, to the most familiar observance of daily life, the religious exercises wound up, with the practice of Catholic virtue, partake of its nature in being unassailable by ridicule. Fielding makes a servant say, "I defy the wisest man in the world to turn a true, good action into ridicule. I defy him to do it. He who should endeavour it, would be laughed at himself, instead of making others laugh." It is the same with the pious practices which Catholic virtue needs. They are identical with true good actions, or at least with a wish to per-

form them.

Nicholas Acciajoli, when minister of state at Naples, in the height of his power and magnificence, used, at certain hours of the day, to leave word at his gate that he could receive no one, being engaged in reciting the Divine office. Every one who travels through Catholic countries will have observed instances of this easy, familiar style, associated with devout practices, by persons of every description, whose prayer, nevertheless, is virtually what the Church formally expresses on the Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi, in the words, "sumptis muneribus sacris, quæsumus, Domine, ut cum frequentatione mysterii cres-

cat nostræ salutis effectus."

Again, we may remark, that some degree of order is required for virtue, and Catholicism is essentially a religion of order, all its devotions being under that influence. The triple division of each day in regard to religious exercises, which St. Gertrude observed, might be cited as an instance, though of course belonging to a more mystic state than that of ordinary persons, however assiduous in the practice of virtue. At each day's beginning, from the hour when the golden morning beamed upwards from the valleys of the East, she offered, we are told, praise to God for all His mercies, and, in consideration that during that whole interval, till nones, the sacrifice of His Son is

offered up on all altars throughout the universal Church, for the salvation of men,-then from nones to vespers, she daily studied to exercise herself in good works, in union with the works of His sacred humanity; but, at vespers, when the pleasant sun was getting low, in bitterness of heart, reflecting upon human impiety, she offered up to God for the emendation of men the pains of Christ's most innocent passion and death\*. Admonished in a vision, St. Bridget was to have four hours' sleep before, and four after midnight. She was to allow herself one hour to sit at table, which, without reasonable cause, was not to be prolonged t. These are examples, of course, that hardly can be said to belong to our path; but others are not wanting to show that order of this kind appertains, in some degree, to all eminent virtue. Alfred the Great divided his time by eight hours employed in devotion and study, eight hours in transacting business, and eight hours in sleep and recreation.

Again, devotion to the memory of Christ's passion, which meets children in the very name given to the alphabet, that was made to begin with its image, and which can never be wholly forgotten by those who are accustomed on many occasions to make on their forehead the sacred sign that the Catholic Church arms her members with, constitutes an essential part in the groundwork of all Christian heroic virtue. Now this, of course, every one knows must be sought for within the Catholic Church; since, on every side, without it, there seems to be only a choice of evils, men having to decide between either a practical ignorance of the doctrine of the atonement, or a reliance upon their personal faith, far more contrary to Christian humility than the disposition of any one who ever practised, with sincerity, good works; the fact being that deeds of real goodness carry with them their own correction, in regard to the mind of him who performs them; whereas, from experience, it seems demonstrated that a purely intellectual act, like the choice of any one doctrine respecting the grounds of salvation, is liable to entail Pharisaical arrogance and self-conceit. But let us observe this great source of supernatural virtue, as existing on the Catholic domains. "She founded all her hope in the merits of Christ, and in His precious blood," says Father Andreas de Ponte, speaking of Marina de Escobar I. St. Bridget has left a perpetual memorial of her devotion, in the affecting and sublime prayers De Passione Domini, which occur in the book of her revelations. St. Natalie, a nun of the third Order of Mercy, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, used to say, "God will not attend to my sins, but only to His dear Son, fastened on the cross for

<sup>+</sup> Rev. Etrav. c. 65. Lib. iv. c. xi. ‡ Vita ejus, P. ii. lib. iii. c. 8.

me \*." St. Gertrude dwelt on the same theme, saying, "As soon as ever a man feels that he has contracted any fault, he ought to offer to God, for his emendation, the innocent passion and death of Jesus Christ†." She thought that she could notify nothing so useful to men as the assurance she had received that Christ stood ever before the eternal Father, and that whenever men committed a fault, through human frailty, He offered His immaculate heart in explation; and that whenever they offended in deed, He showed His perforated hands, and so obtained indulgence for them ‡. "God has given such virtue to the material sun that if linen contract any spot, on being exposed to its rays the spot disappears, and the cloth becomes whiter than before, how much more," she continues, "is the soul purified when shone upon by the sun of justice §?"

"O wondrous doctrine! O comfortable bird, That broodest o'er the troubled sea of the mind, Till it is hush'd and smooth!"

So, in order that the heroic and supernatural morality may be predominant, Catholicism wishes that crucifixes should frequently meet the eye, as if to proclaim from every tree in the forest of life, that Christ reigns from the wood,—regnat à ligno Deus.

Again, supernatural virtue involves, as every one knows, the practice of communion, leading men's ready minds to fellowship divine, a fellowship with goodness. "Against the food of which the eating cost us death," says Rupertus, "there is now a counter food, of which the eating bringeth life eternal ||. The Lamb," he continues, "in the vision of the Apocalypse, had as many horns as there were heads of the dragon, namely seven, to signify the sacraments of God ¶." So virtue is armed sacramentally against the universality of dangers to which it is exposed, while, as the same holy abbot adds, "Omnis sermo Dei ignitus clypeus est sperantibus in se." Now, obviously, the Eucharist, from which supernatural virtue flows, seating men in an orb above corruption, leads men to Catholicity by its existence in the Church, and by the attraction of those multitudes who seek it there so lovingly, that, like St. Clare, they might be represented deriving all their energy from its presence, the words alluding to it being for all to utter, "Parasti in conspectu meo mensam adversus omnes qui tribulant me \*\*."-

<sup>\*</sup> Hist. de l'Ordre de la Mercy, 280, par les Perès de l'Ordre.

<sup>§</sup> iii. c. 11. || De Victoria Verbi Dei, lib. xii. I ¶ Id. lib. i. c. 7. || \*\* Ps. xxii.

"O the powerful charms
By those mystic words implied; not like those
Which, dreadfully pronounced by Circe, changed
Ulysses' followers into beasts; these have
An opposite working: you already feel
But reading them, their saving operations.
And all those sensual, mean, and base desires
Which may have long usurp'd, and tyrannized
Over your reason, of themselves fall off.
Most happy metamorphosis!"

Communion, we are told, is the source of imitation; another thing comprised in this high moral state, and inseparable from it. "There is a kind of serpent," says St. Paulinus, "which, whenever it proceeds to drink, before it comes to the fountain, vomits forth all its poison. Imitate that serpent; and, before you approach the fountain of truth and life, vomit forth all anger and malice against your brethren \*."

"Why would you fall from goodness thus?"

Alas! upon the road of virtue it is not uncommon to hear such expostulations addressed to some one, who replies, with Auria—

> "I had a kingdom once, but am deposed From all that royalty of blest content, By a confederacy 'twixt love and frailty."

Piety's crystalline dominion is half lost, and all old hymns now seem to me made nullity! There are secrets explaining such a fall, that men dare not murmur to themselves. Well, there is a stranger commissioned to this spot for great enfranchisement, sent from heaven to hear them, who says, "How is this? Tell me thine allment—tell me all amiss!"

I am a friend to love, to loves of yore."

So confession is supplied by Catholicity, whereby heroic virtue is maintained or recovered when it had been lost, and the current of an evil custom stemmed. Strength and weakness are placed upon an equal level here; and one aerie discloses both the eagle and the wren. Thus all varieties of the human character are brought ultimately to union in the bosom of truth; thus is effected the coalition of qualities the most opposite, as when rivers, different in the force of their stream, in the colour of their waves, and in the depth of their channel, are seen to join.

<sup>\*</sup> S. Paul. Aquil. lib. Exhortat. 28.

"At Lyons," said Lord Chatham, using this comparison, in allusion to a junction between men of discordant natures, "I was taken to see the place where the Rhone and the Saone meet; the one gentle, feeble, languid, and, though languid, yet of no depth; the other, a boisterous and impetuous torrent; far different as they are, they meet at last." The road of virtue, in consequence of confession and its Divine efficacy, is accessible, therefore, from that road formerly followed, which is trodden by men who have sinned, who have, perhaps, as St. Augustin says, "loved sin!" but Catholicism causes them to be separate from the hardened and impenitent. It causes each to say, with David, in the tragedy—

"I am not desp'rate,—like thyself,
But trust unto the covenant of my God,
Founded on mercy, with repentance built,
And finish'd with the glory of my soul."

Having before passed by the Confession cell, we cannot here remain to observe the penitent and his guide. How divinely

"This artist gathers scatter'd sense, with cunning, Composing the fair jewel of his mind, Broken in pieces, and nigh lost before!"

In a play of Massinger, a despairing wretch, conversing with one who speaks of his own former sins, demands, "Art quiet in thy bosom?" "As the sleep of infants," is the reply. "What are the arts," he again asks, "that make thee live so long in rest?" The other, departing, answers,

"Repentance

Hearty, that cleansed me; reason then confirmed me, I was forgiven, and took me to my beads."

Again, no one need be told, that devotion to the blessed Mother of Christ forms another source of this eminent and holy virtue. Here it must suffice to remark the fact, which, on an earlier road, has been considered in all its relations. We may notice, however, the sweet, natural humility with which every expression of this love is accompanied. It is St. Cassimir who, addressing her, uses these words, which are so becoming on the lips of man—

"Quamvis muta et polluta mea sciam labia : Præsumendum, nec silendum est de tua gloria."

Virtue, in requiring this devotion, and that which is shown in general to all the saints, does not contradict reason, as some would pretend, or the common sentiment of human hearts. Some protesters, with a confidence which fills one with amaze,

ask the most insidious and, one might almost add, inhuman questions. "Can the saints," they demand, "who are in heaven, hear the prayers of men on earth?" Such questions seem directed to shake all religion, to make all Divine ground beneath our feet tremble, as well as to undermine the love of virtue itself, which is the point that here concerns us; for what becomes of virtue if all confidence be lost in the Invisible ?--if there be no belief in a spiritual intercourse between this world and the next? They say, too, "that the intercession of the saints is derogatory to Christ;" but, replies Gerbet, "this intercession is in the supernatural order what secondary causes are in the natural order. If recourse to the former were derogatory to the sovereign efficacity of the merits of the Redeemer, the employment of the latter, as in the instance of medicine, would be a derogation to the sovereign power of the Creator. The finite activity of creatures would have to be condemned through respect for the infinite activity of the Supreme cause; we should, like the Pantheists, have to deny the existence of the finite in order to maintain, in its integrity, the idea of the

Infinite which comprehends all."

Virtue again requires that religious reverence generally should be drawn into action. Accordingly, devotions to the churches, devotions to the dead, and respect for the places even where they sleep, form other practices required by the Catholic religion; for it is not alone monks who are enjoined, when travelling, on passing a church or chapel, to incline devoutly, and invoke their holy patrons, and on no account to pass a cemetery without prayer for the dead, as, where we read, "Cometeria absque oratione pro defunctis nullatenus decet pertransire," and to observe the same usage on passing a spot where any one has been killed or executed\*. It is in the moral as in the natural forest where the dead nourish the living; for, as in the forest, there is no surer measure of destruction, in a time more or less distant, than that of removing, systematically, the litter of the trees, no soil being sufficiently energetic and fruitful as to be able to give always without ever receiving, and the dead leaves being the provision made for it by nature; so, without the spiritual nourishment, supplied by the pious memory and tender care of the dead, according to the usage of Catholicism, the religious and moral productiveness of no soul can be perpetuated. But in general we find Catholicism producing innumerable institutions calculated to elevate the human mind, and retain it in the exercise of heroic virtue. We read of the merchants of Edinburgh forming a guild, and erecting a chapel with an altar, and chaplain supported from the entry monies or fees paid by new mem-

Hæftenus, Œconomiæ Mon. lib. viii. c. 4.

bers, in honour of the Holy Blood, which was one of the last religious structures before the reform. Similarly, we are told, that in every Dominican convent in Belgium, as doubtless elsewhere, there were certain confraternities, composed of laymen of the town, nobles and others, who met in its Church. Thus, in Ghent, there was the brotherhood of St. Appolonia, to promote mutual peace and charity; in Antwerp, the brotherhoods of the Rosary, of the Holy Name of Jesus, and of the Blessed Sacrament; and in Mosatrajecta, that of the angelic knighthood of St. Thomas Aquinas against immorality \*. The devotion to holy relics leaves traces in the history of political alliances: for, the republic of Arles having charitably sent a gift of corn to Venice in a year of famine, the grateful Venetians, in return, sent them a relic of St. Mark the Evangelist, which was preserved till the revolution in the Church of Notre Dame, at Arles. Such was the token of cordial amity contracted between the two republics †. States, acting upon supernatural and heroic principles, like individuals, had occasion thus to practise similar devotions. It should be remarked in general, that divers minute practices of pietv are provided by Catholicism, and that it is precisely those persons whose generous and heroic virtues have excited the admiration of mankind, who most observe them. These devotions may appear trifles to the ignorant; but, as Michael Angelo replied to the visitor, who thought that in retouching, and polishing, and softening down the statue, he had been doing nothing, we should recollect that trifles make perfection, and that perfection is no trifle. To desire Catholic virtues of the highest order without Catholic devotions instituted to produce them, is to wish the thing and not to wish the means of the thing, to wish and to wish not. The connexion between them is remarked by a French historian, who, speaking of Louis IX., says, "Some writers mention with disdain the practices of religion which he imposed on himself, and which they represent as excesses; but can any one know what bridle he had need of to subdue his passions? Nothing in the sanctuary of the conscience, which recalls us to God, ought to be blamed when the duties of our station do not suffer t." Passavanti alludes to these devotions, prescribing against venial sins the observance of eight remedies, expressed in the lines-

"Confiteor, tundo, conspergor, conteror, oro, Signor, edo, dono; per hæc venialia pono."

<sup>\*</sup> De Jonghe, Belgium Dominicanum.

<sup>+</sup> Du Port, Hist. de l'Eglise d'Arles.

<sup>#</sup> D'Anquetil.

These things, with all their comfortings, are given to "our downsunken hours, and with them we may be able to stem the ebbing sea of weary life." When they see or hear evil said or done, or God blasphemed, men of this high virtue, as an exercise conducive to it, observe the practice recommended by St. Francis of Assisi, taking occasion on the spot to praise God who is blessed tor ever\*. Explaining the mystery of the golden snuffers near the candlestick of the temple, Antonio de Guevara says, "This is to teach us to purge our conscience frequently; for, if it be necessary to snuff the candle three or four times in the hour, it will not be prudent to delay for months to snuff or purify the soul \(\tau\)."

"Take my advice," said the Spanish housekeeper to her distracted master, "which is given," she adds, "by one fasting, and with fifty years over my head; stay at home, look after your estate, go often to confession, and relieve the poor; and if any ill comes of it, let it lie at my door." In fine, abstinence, to the utility of which allusion is made by Cervantes in the above passage, and occasional retreat, with all the absence which it implies of restless devotion to a false standard, form other instances of this Catholic discipline, appropriate to the wants of those who follow the road of virtue. Among things chiefly to be avoided, it specifies luxury of the table, and intellectual luxury, implied in the love of receiving letters. In other words, it requires a manly, frugal style of living, and the absence of vanity requiring the excitement of a multiplied correspondence.

Virtue requires habits of self-denial in little as well as great things, and hence the practical wisdom of the Church is seen in prescribing abstinence and fasts, the observance of which, at specific times, generates such habits, and prepares men for practising them on great occasions. Plato remarks, that "at the table of his heroes before Troy, Homer never places fish, though they were encamped near the Hellespont \( \delta \)." His roast joints agree well, perhaps, with the character of the achievements he liked best. Plutarch, with a view to virtues nearer to the Christian, wrote a treatise against the abuse of flesh meat; and Galen pronounces fish to be a most wholesome food; a consideration which writers on the supernatural discipline do not disdain to suggest \( \mathbb{I} \).

Some brothers relate of the abbot Niceta, a disciple of the abbot Silvanus, that when in his cell on Mount Sina, he mode-

<sup>\*</sup> Spec. Vitæ S. F. c. 17.

‡ Spec. Vitæ S. Franc.

\$ De Repub. iii,

<sup>||</sup> Hæft., Œconomiæ Monast. viii. 6.

rately abstained; but, when made bishop at Faran, he increased his fasts and abstinence, and when asked why he did so, he replied, "consider, my brother, that there was the desert, and secret life, and poverty; but now, conversing with secular men in the world. I fear the many occasions of offending which are presented; and therefore I attend the more against it \*." The historical testimonies respecting the observance of the Catholic

discipline are curious. Pope Innocent I. says, "we do not deny that we should fast every Friday; but we say that we should also fast on the Saturday, through regard for the sadness of the apostles †." St. Louis, in his last sickness, refused to take chicken broth on a Saturday, because he had not special licence from his confessor, who was absent I. This king, so eminent for his heroic greatness of soul, used to fast on all the vigils of the apostles, though they were not fasts in the diocese of Paris, or where he was residing; and he used gracefully to excuse himself, as it were, by saying that he did so because he was of the diocese of Chartres, where they were days of fast 0.

From the capitularies of Charlemagne and St. Isidore of

Seville, we learn that "the abstinence of Saturday used then to be generally observed ||;" but St. Gregory VII. seems to have been the first to make it a general law for the whole Church. "Because the Saturday, with our holy fathers, has been observed as a day of abstinence, we, following their authority, admonish all who desire to be partakers of the Christian religion to abstain from flesh on Saturdays." Such was the

decree of the Roman council in 1078¶.

The inutility of such observances in connexion with virtue of the heroic order, does not seem to be an experimental certainty. The observation of recent times in some circles would hardly justify the opinion that the supernatural and heroic virtues of Catholicism can be promoted to any remarkable extent, while the discipline which formerly fostered them is abolished. However, the wisdom of moderation has in all ages exercised a control over the inclinations which moved men to exercise devotions of this kind. "Immoderate abstinence does not please me; for I seek reasonable things," said the mystic voice to St. Bridget, as she relates in her revelations \*\*. And again it said to her, "let him who fasts attend, that he be not weakened by an irrational fasting, lest from weakness he should be unable to perform good works; for if he should become tepid

<sup>\*</sup> Mag. Spec. 2. + Epist. i. c. 4. † Duchesne, v. p. 472. || ii. c. 16. § Thomassin, Traité des Jeuns, ii. c. 13.

Thomassin, Traité des Jeuns, ii. 16.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Lib. i. c. 34.

and remiss through fasting, he must refrain from such excess, knowing that he has need of corporal as well as of spiritual fortitude; and if it be his wish to fast, he will have the same

merit, while eating, as if he fasted \*."

In fine, the silence which we before observed as belonging to men on other roads, appears to be occasionally required by those who devote themselves to this high and Divine kind of virtue, who will say, with Menelaus,—

"Sometimes silence, sometimes speech is best."

— ἔστι δ' οῦ σιγὴ λόγου κρείσσων γένοιτ' ἀν, ἔστι δ' οῦ σιγῆς λόγος †.

Catholicism corresponds with this want of the mind. Indeed, that the retrenchment of conversation was to accompany that of feasts during times set apart for fasting, may be inferred from the matin hymn for the Sunday in Lent, which contains the lines,—

"Utamur ergo parcius Verbis, cibis et potibus."

"Pater, die mihi verbum quo salvus efficiar?" said a brother in the desert to an old hermit whom he found among the craggy rocks; and he replied to him, "Fuge homines et tace, et salvus eris‡." The angel said to Arsenus, "Fuge, tace, et quiesce." The age of Louis XIV. was as familiarized with this precept as the age of the Egyptian hermits. Bossuet begins a letter with the same words, saying, "If you wish to be saved, keep silence." The quality of the pies,

" -- Garrulitas, studiumque immane loquendi §,"

characterizes the opposition to the virtue which we have been surveying. It is carried on by objections, reproaches, calumnies, misrepresentations, challenges, imprecations, vociferations, and by every mode of abusing the gift of language. But the mystic silence at the feet of Jesus Christ, represented by St. Mary Magdalen, as St. John Chrysostom says, belongs, at times, to the character of those who practise Catholic and heroic virtue.

St. Peter Damian, writing to the empress Agnes, describes the effects, saying, "while the sound of human speech ceases,

<sup>\*</sup> Lib. vi. c. 65.

<sup>†</sup> Orest. 638.

<sup>#</sup> Mag. Spec.

<sup>§</sup> Met. v.

the temple of the Holy Ghost is constructed within men by silence.—In silentio fortitudo \*." Weakness is in words. "Turbatus sum," says the Psalmist, "et non sum locutus †." And again, "obmutui, et silui à bonis ‡." And on this St. Ambrose says, "si hoc cavet propheta, tu non caves? Si hoc metuit in quo gratia Dei loquebatur, tu non metuis qui erroris verba non refugis?" The abbot de Rance has written a chapter on silence §, which should be read by those who are disposed to inquire respecting the connexion between the highest virtue and this religious practice, which, at intervals, recommends itself even to the natural sense of what is noble and becoming, so that the old dramatic poet, describing a most charming and perfect person, says,—

"She is in love with virtue, and loves silence, Not that she wants apt words (for when she speaks She inflames love with wonder), but because She calls wise silence the soul's harmony."

And, accordingly, St. Chrysostom compares a silent soul to a mountain, where the only sounds are zephyrs and waters flow-

ing, and on which the sun sends his brightest rays.

But we must hasten on. It is sufficient to have observed that, while naturalism in every form from which men can be moved by reason to recoil, is ready to dispense with all external and consequently interior exercises of devotion, the supernatural and heroic morality, which attracts virtuous men, and even sinners, involves, more or less, their observance, so that as whoever wishes the one must wish the other also, the practice of such things perpetuated in the Church supplies, by itself, a distinct avenue through which the truth of Catholicity is seen. It only remains, then, to cast a passing glance at the delights by which, even to the eye of observers from without the sphere of holiness, supernatural virtue is allured and crowned.

"Man," says Paschal, "is at a loss where to fix himself, and to recover his proper station in the world. He is unquestionably out of his way; he feels within himself the small remains of his once happy state, which he is now unable to retrieve. And yet this is what he daily courts and follows after, always with

solicitude, and never with success."

"---- Cœlum quid quærimus ultra ?"

<sup>\*</sup> Isa. xxx. † lxxvi. ‡ xxxviii.

<sup>§</sup> De la Sainteté de la Vie Monast. c. xvii.

What seek we beyond heaven? Virtue, nourished and enlightened by faith, under the guidance of Catholicism, secures this

universal and supreme object of the human heart.

It is not for the stranger, who merely follows as a kind of spy the road we have been treading to speak of the essential and the accidental reward of holy virtue in general, the latter consisting, as Henry Suso says, "in the joy which the soul derives from goodness; and the former in its union with God\*." It may be permitted for him, however, to glance at what mere artists are not blamed for representing. In one old painting, then, we are shown the contrast between a sinner's and a Catholic's day. A man in his chamber is confronted with a demon, presenting him with a drinking cup; a pompous dame, holding a pack of cards, sits at a table. The bed and floor are strewed with thorns. Through a window in the distance the exploits of the preceding morning are shown—a poor man repulsed with disdain—a drinking bout, a duel, the stopping of a covered waggon in which some travellers are attacked; and the words inscribed below the scene are these—

"Die male exacto, mirum quid serus vesper vehat."

At the other side of the picture, you see a young man kneeling before a triptych—a taper at the bed's-side indicates that the day is spent. The floor and bed are strewed with flowers. In the distance, through a window, you see what had been the employments of that day. A traveller who gives alms, a man who enters the church, a labourer who digs in the field, and a mechanic who weaves in a room. The lines under this portion of the picture are these,—

"Vespere quem mulcet liquida ac serena voluptas Qui solidam virtute diem expendisse revolvit;"

and then these words are added-

"Gaudebis semper vespère si diem expenderis fructuose."

Such are the contrasts which Catholic virtue and naturalism supply. Their reality is attested by philosophers themselves. "In wishing," says Leibnitz, "that the Divinity should be the object, not only of our fear and veneration, but also of our love and tenderness, Jesus Christ prepared to render men happy by anticipation, and to give them a foretaste of the future felicity †." "Although the love of God be disinterested, it constitutes," as he says in another place, "our greatest interest, even

when one considers only the pleasure which it yields, without

having regard to the utility which it produces."

Similarly, as the Père Rogacci remarks, "even the fear of the Lord is represented as joyous and agreeable-timor Domini gloria, et gloriatio, et lætitia, et corona exultationis. Timor delectabit cor, et dabit lætitiam et gaudium et longitudinem dierum \*." So that St. Augustin might even, in regard to this result, have used the sublime words, "Vis fugere a Deo? Fuge ad Deum." "If the fear of the Lord," continues Rogacci, "were a terror of having God as an enemy, it would not have been ascribed by Isaiah to the Messiah. Et requiescet super eum spiritus timoris Domini †. Nor said by David to endure for ever with the saints-timor Domini sanctus permanens in sæculum sæculi ‡."

Neither pleasures, indeed, of any kind, nor the goods that the world, in opposition to the Catholic religion, offers, can ever prove the truth or virtue of those who enjoy them, for these God gives sometimes to His enemies—to the impious and blasphemers; but, says St. Augustin, "there is a good which He reserves for the good alone. What is that which He reserves exclusively for the good-Himself V." Behold St. Peter upon Thabor-" unam stillam gustavit, et omnem aliam fastidivit dulcedinem." So all raptures, ecstasies, visions, and revelations within the Church, however associated with a feeling of terror in the conception of others, are seen to be accompanied with a placid and most natural joy; and Dante does but show the general consequence when he describes what he beheld and heard:

"---- What is this, sire belov'd, 'Gainst which I strive to shield the sight in vain ? Cried I, and which toward us moving seems ? Marvel not, if the family of heav'n, He answered, yet with dazzling radiance dim Thy sense. It is a messenger who comes Inviting man's ascent. Such sights ere long, Not grievous, shall impart to thee delight, As thy perception is by nature wrought Up to their pitch. The blessed angel soon As we had reach'd him, hail'd us with glad voice |."

"At the very instant," says St. Bernard, "that the servant of our Lord doth determine with himself to serve Christ, presently, in the same moment of time Christ cometh to succour him; and of myself," adds Antonio de Guevara, after citing the passage,

+ xi. 2.

<sup>\*</sup> Eccles. i. 12.

L'Art de traiter avec Dieu. ‡ Ps. xviii. 10.

<sup>§</sup> In Ps. lxxii.

<sup>||</sup> Purg. 15.

"I dare affirm that I did never occupy my heart in any good thought, but I felt Christ presently stand at my side." St. Ignatius of Loyola said, that "he used to hear in his heart, as it were, a certain music and harmony incomparable, though without any sensible sound." The supernatural and heroic virtue of Catholicism, by its joyfulness, proclaims its central origin. Divine faith, as St. Dionysius says, is a fixed collocation of believers, placing them in truth, confirming simple truth by an intransmutable identity in themselves-" from the joy of which," says St. Bonaventura, "nothing can move them \*." The author of the Ménagier de Paris remarks, among causes that prevent men from having recourse to confession, that there is such a thing as despair of the consequences of virtue. He calls it 'despérance de ce que l'on a si grant plaisir au péchié qu'on ne s'en puet partir ne repentir, et se pense-on que pour riens se confesseroit-on pour tantost rencheoir; et de ce c'est la mort †." In this respect the nineteenth does not differ from the thirteenth century. "But," says Leibnitz, "nothing would be stronger than truth, if one endeavoured to know it well. When I consider what ambition or avarice can do in all those who once enter on this train of life, which is almost wholly destitute of sensible and present attraction, I despair of nothing; and I maintain that virtue would produce infinitely more effect, attended as it is with so many solid advantages, if some happy revolution of the human race were one day to bring it into vogue, and render it fashionable. It is an experimental certainty that one can accustom young persons to find their greatest pleasure in the exercise of virtue; and even grown-up men might make laws and habits for themselves, which would cause them as much uneasiness if they were turned from them as a drunkard would feel when hindered from going to the wineshop \(\frac{1}{2}\)." Ah, yes! The sayings of the just are true.

> "All human worldly courses are uneven, No life is blessed but the way to heaven."

"Piety," say those who can speak from experience, "is for many a new existence, on which it is sweet to enter. It grows," they tell us, "upon the heart like peace, creating, every other hour, a jubilee." Whereas other men like ourselves can attest that nature has often that power in us to levy up a thousand bleeding sorrows, and not one comfort. Its joys are full of disappointment; for it is the quality of all sensual pleasure to create a craving which cannot be satisfied.

<sup>\*</sup> De Sept. Itin. Æter. † D. i. A. iii.

<sup>†</sup> Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain, liv. ii. vol. vi. E e

Oh, how many bleeding hearts in the poor human family! O God! O God! how bitter is love when it is hopeless!when it thinks of the absent :--when it remembers the arm pressed fondly round the neck; -when its poor imagination presents before it the smile that kindled it to rapture, the hair with which its fingers played; -when it sees no return of such hours possible-when it is torn away from the object, and that for ever! But, oh! how sweet is love, when, with a dulcet agony it dies into the love of Love, and in that Love hopes to regain all things :-- when it loses itself in God, who loves each and all, as He died for each and all upon the cross—the holy cross, which will save all, bless all, crown all who from the anguish of this vale of tears fly to it, and embrace the wood, on which, for all our sakes. Love itself was nailed! Take away this last, supreme hope; and, oh! how miserable is man! What, then, is love-love frustrated?

"O'tis a cruel thing! alas, how changed am I!"

exclaims its victim, "changed even in regard to what is sensual,"

of mine was once made perfect in these woods. Fresh breezes, bowry lawns, and innocent floods, Ripe fruits and lonely couch, contentment gave; Now I no longer close my happy eyes Amid the thrush's song!

Then, with another poet, he proceeds to utter these complaints,—

"My genial spirits fail,
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within?"

Let but Catholic piety revive, and the strain will change, for words like those of Aurelio in the Antiquary, "since I have tasted the sweetness of my freedom, thou dost not know what quickness and agility is infused into me; I feel not that weight was wont to clog me where'er I went; I am all fire and spirit, as if I had been stript of my mortality." At the very first steps upon this path, one feels an invigorating air; and so another poet says,—

"While cloy'd to find the scenes of life the same, I tune with careless hand my languid lays; Some secret impulse wakes my former flame, And fires my strain with hopes of brighter days."

It is not a palliative that this great specific furnishes, such as letters yielded to Cicero, when he said, "sic litteris utor, in quibus consumo omne tempus, non ut ab his medicinam perpetuam, sed ut exiguam doloris oblivionem petam." It is truly a

perfect, and no doubt an eternal remedy.

Catholicism, by piety, immerses man's existence in a golden clime, and there breathes ambrosia; it secures the right exercise of that noble faculty whereby he is able to live in the past and in the future, in the distant and, in what seems to others, the unreal. It removes that discontent which St. Ephrem describes, saying, that "in the monastery the demon sets before the imagination the desert, though there is sufficient solitude in the monastery, and in the desert the happiness of those who are in the monastery \*." "Flying to the desert, the discontented man," he says, "is no sooner there than, lamenting his monastery, he cries, 'alas! how well I was while with the brethren. Who hath seduced me? or what demon compelled me to see this horrible desert? where are many wild beasts, evil and terrible. What if I fall into the hands of barbarians, or of robbers, or of demons? which infest such deserts. How can I live here alone, who am accustomed to life in community †?" So it is with men intended for the common life in the world. They are made miserable even by the love of beauty. It is absent; but they have its figure before them, and every grace and rarity about it are, by the pencil of their memory,

"In living colours painted on their heart."

Catholic virtue, with all its exquisite sensibility, ever inspired by the hope of an ultimate and eternal union, is, in time, contented every where; its joys are not at the mercy of a wandering imagination of a passing shadow, as in those walks of the distracted, where the old poet truly says, "a word often suffices to cause us dismay and exultation."

— πολλά τοι σμικροὶ λόγοι ἔσφηλαν ἤδη καὶ κατώρθωσαν βροτούς ‡.

Without that spirit, that hope, that presentiment, men will,

<sup>\*</sup> Adhortationes. ‡ Soph. Electra, 415.

<sup>+</sup> Paræneses ad Monach.

more or less, be self-tormentors; and modern literature and experience can abundantly attest it: for what numbers resemble, in regard to intellectual suffering, Swift, who, with all his jesting and merriment, did not know what it was to have a mind at ease, or free from the burden and torment of dark devouring passions, till, in his own words, "the cruel indignation that tore continually at his heart was laid at rest in the grave."

But let us briefly observe in how many points the sweetness that results from the supernatural virtue can be traced by men

who are as far from it, perhaps, as any can be.
"What more laborious in this life," says the rule of solitaries, "than to burn with earthly desires? Or what more secure than to seek nothing of the vanity of this world? They who love this world are disturbed by its cares, but they who depart from it, begin already to taste that rest of future peace which they expect hereafter \*." "What is sweeter or more pleasant to a man," says Peter of Blois, "than to despise the world, and to regard himself as above the world, and on the same secure elevation of his conscience to have the world under his feet? to see nothing in it which he desires or fears, nothing which he can lose, and in that incorruptible, uncontaminated inheritance, directing his eyes to heaven, to trample upon fallacious riches, pernicious honours, and damnable delights †."

These are indeed sayings of the perfect relating to an experience of which common men may know little; but it is no less certain that every one, however exposed to the circumstances of an active and ordinary life, who seeks to approach towards happiness, must endeavour, more or less, to realize them in himself. True, "delicata est divina consolatio," as Robert d'Arbriselle says, "et non datur admittentibus alienam !." But where is the misery of wanting what not alone the true and eternal, but even the shadowy and temporal happiness excludes? "With the love of God," says the rule of St. Columban, "we have need of but few things, or rather but of one-pauca namque sunt necessaria vera, sine quibus non transigitur, aut etiam uno, quasi cibo juxta literam, puritate autem sensus indigemus per gratiam Dei, ut intelligamus spiritualiter, quæ sunt illa pauca caritatis quæ Marthæ a Domino suggerantur V."

There are moments when poets of the world feel all this, and lament the passing away of such lofty inspirations. So one of

them exclaims.-

<sup>\*</sup> Regula Solitariorum ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg. ii.

<sup>+</sup> Pet. Blesens, de Charitate Dei.

<sup>#</sup> Opus Quadripart. lib. ii.

<sup>§</sup> Regula S. Columbani 4.

"The visions all are fled, the car is fled
Into the light of heaven, and in their stead
A sense of real things comes doubly strong,
And, like a muddy stream, would bear along
My soul to nothingness."

What a happiness it is, when thrown in the midst of men, and of affairs, to have a specific for the sorrow of the imagination, which is so apt, as we already observed, to brood over the position in which one is placed, over the pleasures that are absent, over the scenes that one has no hope of ever again beholding! The Count de Maistre, writing to a certain countess, asks how she finds herself in the little town of Memel. "What a Berlin!" he continues, "I conceive that it must sadly wound your imagination. Hélas! il y a bien peu de choses dans l'univers qui soient encore à leur place \*." The Catholic virtue renders men content, let their place be where it may; and what is that result but a practical and incomparable benefit? "Those that scorn their nest," says the popular voice, "oft flie with a sick wing." Catholicity imparts cheerfulness as well as contentment.

The Count de Maistre speaks of his endeavouring every evening, at St. Petersburg, in a banishment that involved his not having ever seen even one of his own children, to recover a little of that native gaiety which he has been able to preserve. "Je souffle," he says, "sur ce feu comme une vieille femme souffle pour rallumer sa lampe sur le tison de la veille †." Catholicity, productive of supernatural and heroic virtue, enables men thus to be humanely, youthfully cheerful to the last.

Again, as we before remarked, to be catholically humble implies no want of truest pleasure. "Nam sicut superbi honoribus," says St. Gregory, "sic plerumque humiles sua despectione gratulantur." Joannes Major, speaking of one holy man, says, that "he feared to lose the security of his poverty as much as greedy rich men dread to lose their perishable riches ‡." Their dross but weighs them down, while his sublimed spirits dance in the air. We observed on a former road how the heart of youth at least naturally loves the habits of life which are excluded by pride and the affectation of a superior social position; and in this respect there are many who enjoy their minority to the last.

"Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars, But pleasure, lark-like, nests upon the ground."

<sup>\*</sup> Lettres, &c. i. 13.

<sup>†</sup> Ibid.

Humility is, therefore, found by experience to constitute a source of positive enjoyment. So also, unlike the generation of Romans whom Tacitus describes as "mæsti et rumorum avidi\*," to be indifferent to the news of the world, as Catholicism recommends, involves no unreasonable sacrifice for men who are not called on to conduct its affairs, since even the heathen poet, who sought to glorify the happiest life, expressly advises men to be so, saying,

"Quid bellicosus Cantaber, et Scythes Hirpine Quineti, cogitet, Adria Divisus objecto, remittas Quærere †."

Remark that class of the population which seems most cheerful and desirous of passing life joyfully, like the daughters of Oldrent, "that cannot live but by laughing, and that aloud, and nobody sad within hearing." What do any of these persons care for the news of the day? They are utterly indifferent to all the elaborate articles provided for the melancholy speculations of each hour, which cause such prolongation of countenance in the numerous tribe of self-tormentors who make journalism a profitable trade. The mere instinct of enjoyment, therefore, in this respect, brings men to the same point to which the high supernatural and heroic life conducts the virtuous.

According to St. Ambrose, again, it is sweeter to be Catholically temperate, than to make use of the dispensations which are granted to relax discipline. "Dulcior est enim," he says, "religiosa castigatio quam blanda remissio." And the reason of this may be discovered if we remark, with Leibnitz, that the chagrin and pain which accompany a victory over the passions, turn, in some men, to pleasure, by the great contentment which they find in the living sentiment of the force of their mind, and of Divine grace. "The ascetics and true mystics," he adds, "can speak of this from experience, and even a human philosopher can say something on it‡." That the specific act of forgiveness, too, is agreeable, no one who has ever practised it can doubt.—

"Revenge, at first though sweet Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils."

"Well might our Lord say, 'Quoniam onus meum leve est;'

\* Hist. i. 4.

‡ Od. ii. 8.

for," continues St. Ephrem, "what weight is it to forgive the trespasses of our brother against us? Truly, it is lightsome as the morning air to pardon and to be pardoned. He does not say, 'Bring to me riches, or oxen, or goats, or fasting, or vigils,' lest we might reply, 'I cannot;' but, what is compendious and light-' Forgive your brother \*.'" "In general, we should admire," says St. Stephen of Grandmont, "the sweetness of the commandments of God; for, if God had said, 'I will not hear your prayer unless a great multitude be present when you pray, nor receive your alms unless when seen by many, nor accept your love until you had procured for yourself all that is needful, it would be difficult to combine these things. Similarly, it is easier to be poor and humble than proud and rich, easier to follow humility than vanity and pride. How sweet are the Divine counsels! For it is much easier to examine oneself, and see what is within, than to examine another, and investigate his interior †." Catholic obedience, as from one of the people, exercised in compliance with positive decrees, ordaining good, yields greater pleasure than vague spontaneous actions, performed in compliance only with one's own will, like a philosopher, loving singularity, and nothing but what emanates from himself. Therefore, a recent poet says of man-

"Virtue and gentleness of mind yield him a dream of bliss, But, undefined, these feelings droop, far, far, from happiness."

Above all, the Catholic state of mind, involving charity, comprising sweet, human love, with every tender, gentle feeling of our nature, entering into its foundation, its essence, and its development must necessarily conduce to a life of happiness, when compared with every other moral condition; the difference between the serenity of charity and the darkness of every passion that is opposed to it, directly or indirectly, being, in fact, incalculable.

"The heart thus warmed by charity Divine, Grasps the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense, In one close system of benevolence: Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree, And height of bliss but height of charity."

There is, beginning perhaps from love's dim taper, kindling some youthful attachment, and thence, because all may resemble those first and best loved, extending to all our brothers and

<sup>\*</sup> De Charitate Fraterna.

<sup>+</sup> S. Steph. Grandimont, Liber Sententiarum, c. 20-34.

sisters in Adam, a restless, burning affection for humanity, for our fellow-creatures, for every one we meet wearing a human face, wherever we may meet it, which, though we find them, as angels are found, by legions, each seeming brighter than the other, cannot be satiated. As youth confesses, in the old Interlude, he who experiences it will say—

"To be alone is not my appetie,
For of all thinges in the world I love sweet company.
Dyd you heare anye lads and lasses playe
As you came hetherward upon your way?
And if you dyd, I praye you wyshe me thyther,
For I am going to seke them; and, in favth, I know not whither,"

We would be able to taste the life of love again; we would be always with companions—

"To walk with lovers in our fields of love, And spend the course of everlasting time Under green myrtle trees and cypress shades,"

beholding the light of their sweet smiles, wiping away, perhaps, a starting tear, straying as it were with them through the woods, over the rocks, on the rivers, over the dewy slopes. As we read, in the old lines, inscribed within the tower, on the rocks near Clifton—

"Twenty times shall Avon's tide
In chains of glist'ning ice be tied—
Twenty times the woods of Leigh
Shall wave their branches merrily,
In Spring burst forth in mantle gay,
And dance in Summer's scorching ray;
Twenty times shall Autumn's frown
Wither all their green to brown—
And still with those of yesterday
We'd laugh the happy hours away."

Well, according to the natural order, this ceaseless return of bliss, this delicious, uninterrupted intercourse is impossible; there must here below be "faint fare-thee-wells and sigh-shrilled adieus!" But Catholicism says, there is another order, according to which we may hope and realize all things; for let this love, as a great writer says, in order to love best, be made "a secondary passion," let it be combined in a higher degree with the love of Love, that is, of God, and of the high virtues required by Him who is the essence of our being, the anchor of our hopes, the real substance of our felicity, who, to crown all, and to leave

without excuse those who turn from Him, declares, that He accepts the faith, and love, and gratitude of those debtors who owe the most, and who have done most, perhaps, through doating upon dust, to require His forgiveness-and then the brightest vision of the tenderest and most expansive heart may be fulfilled; then, in some happy plains, we shall be ever as it were in company with those we love, without knowing the secret link that binds us to them; who, after all, let their faults be what they may, are our own parallels, not like lines divided, which can never meet in one centre, but converging to Him "in whom they live, and move, and have their being;" and, eventually, if it be not through their or our own perversity, which every thing in Catholicism tends to avert, we shall be reunited with them, and inseparably associated with them, where such as have been sainted, are prepared to welcome us without any more repugnance to delight, in a summer that will never wane, in a youth that will never fade, in a joy that will never pall upon the senses, for the eternal years.

"There's a perpetual spring, perpetual youth.
No joint-benumbing cold, or scorching heat,
Famine, nor age, have any being there.
Forget, for shame, your Tempe; bury in
Oblivion your feign'd Hesperian orchards:—
The golden fruit, kept by the watchful dragon,
Which did require a Hercules to get it
Compared with what grows in all plenty there,
Deserves not to be named. The Power we serve
Laughs at your happy Araby, or the
Elysian shades, for he hath made his bowers
Better in deed, than you can fancy yours."

"Hinc est via qua itur in cœlum," as St. Bruno says. And yet what road on earth more beautiful? It might recall the memory of that path of lovers on which we once found ourselves. It is perfumed with an infinite variety of flowers, warmed with the light of golden skies, abounding with such new and vital pleasures that nature, vanquished as it were with her own weapons, seems to please no more. The sage who, from a distance, contemplated it, could recognize that it was the road of true beatitude. "Is, quisquis est," he said, "qui moderatione et constantia quietus animo est sibique ipse placatus—is est beatus \*." Men first began to have peace," says St. Bruno, "when they began to love God and their neighbour, expelling anger, and hatred, and discord from themselves, agreeing to-

gether, in the concord of one faith, consenting to one another, flying the vain doctrine of the philosophers and heretics. Such is the peace in the Church of God—such is the peace to men of

good will \*."

But further it is needless to point out the issues from the road of virtue, inspiring by examples, guarded by exceptions, instructive by contrasts, and attractive by its great rewards. Virtue finds its centre where God has placed it,—in faith, in compliance with primeval revelation, in popular simplicity transmitting it, in the communion of saints, in fellowship with the faithful people, in the holy Catholic Church; for, to use Dantæan language—

To her may be addressed the words of St. Augustin, "ubi, nisi apud te, firma securitas?" Where without thy mystic pale, or in lines that end in it, is that high virtue which God inspires, humanity adores, and happiness attends? O wondrous centre!—

"Well learned is that tongue, that well can thee commend All ignorant that soul, that sees thee without wonder."

The heathen poet prays that heaven, in order to punish the guilty, will only cause them to see virtue,—

"Virtutem videant, intabescantque relicta.""

Catholicism has other vows; it prays that all poor sinners opposed to her communion, or faltering in life within it, may see the virtue it inspires, may see a St. Thomas of Aquin in the schools, a St. Louis on the throne, a St. Stanislaus on the form of boys, a St. Elizabeth in the castle, a St. Isidore in the field, a St. Zita in the kitchen, a St. Eloy in the workshop—not to feel the bitter punishment which shame and discouragement inflict, but to revive sweetly, naturally, and, in fine, gloriously, by being kindled with its sacred flame; for the Divine grace, the human goodness, the sweet and glorious combination of moral beauty in such luminaries were not possessed for themselves alone. They were beacons to light others on the way to immortality, and to proclaim,—

"The power of virtue, whose commanding sovereignty Sets bounds to rebel-bloods; and checks, restrains Custom of folly; by example teaches A rule to reformation; by rewards Crowns worthy actions, and invites to honour."

Can this consummation be expected now, seeing the numbers and obduracy of those who need to breathe spiritual and vital air? Some harsh observers, loving what is extreme, seem to doubt it. "To reascend," says one writer of this class, "from the abyss of error to the summit of truth, in spite of the passions let loose, in spite of instruction based on falsehood, in spite of the press prostituted and abused,-that seems to me contrary to all that we know of the laws which govern the moral world." But others, like the Count de Maistre, have more hope. Disposed to look less on faults than on what is great and good in their contemporaries, they address each as if for the first time meeting with such characters, and say, in the words of the old dramatist, "never till now did admiration beget in me truly the rarematch'd twins at once-pity and pleasure. Pity, that one so noble, so abundant in best gifts of nature, should not partake the comfort of those beams with which the sun, beyond extent, doth cheer the faithful fold. Yet my pleasure follows from you when I think that false charms may at length fly from your intelligence, as far as heaven's great lamp from every minor star." Virtue works strangely with us. "Let them only see," he says, "Catholic virtue. The conformity of our conduct with our maxims, and all the estimable enemies of our faith will lose their prejudices, and throw themselves into our arms." Nought but a fair tree, they will conclude, could such fair fruit bear. Now Catholics, in whom this conformity can be traced, men and women, youths and maidens, thus generous and noble in their actions, thus brave and affectionate, kind, sincere, and full of goodness, so as to express it even in every line of their countenance, are not of those who occupy so small a place in the world that their existence can be unknown, and that wanderers through the forest of life can pass always without ever meeting them; we have not to search for them in black-letter Hagiographies. They are found living in the labourer's thatched cabin, in the city, in the suburbs, in shops, in schools, in the fields, in the forum, in the army, in the assemblies of the great, in the academies of the learned, at the court, and even sometimes still in the palaces of kings. For

"The sun of the Church shoots
An equal influence on the open cottage
Where the poor shepherd's child is rudely nurs'd,
And on the cradle where the prince is rock'd
With care and whisper."

Let us conclude, then, with the latter, and believe that those who have been following these long roads will be won by what seems to many the last and most decisive of all arguments,—that, seeing such virtue, they will turn to that great central influence of the Catholic Church which yields it, and form to her an attachment, which may be truly expressed, by saying, with the poet—

"Mi neque amare aliam neque ab hac discedere fas est. Hujus ero vivus, mortuus hujus ero."

But we are approaching the purlieus of the forest,—only three ways remaining to be investigated;

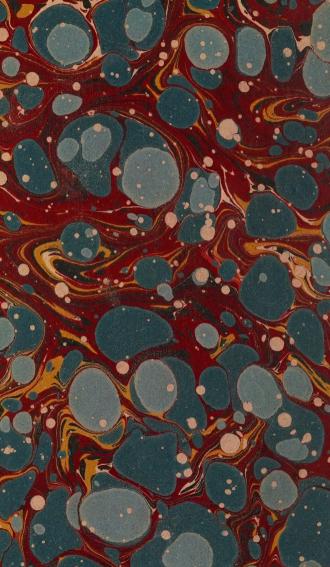
"When of these thou wilt have reach'd the end, There hope to rest thee from thy toil."

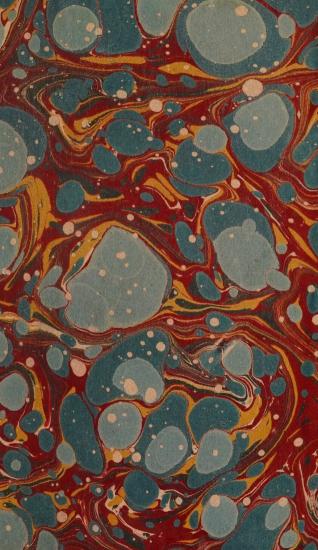
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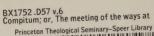














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